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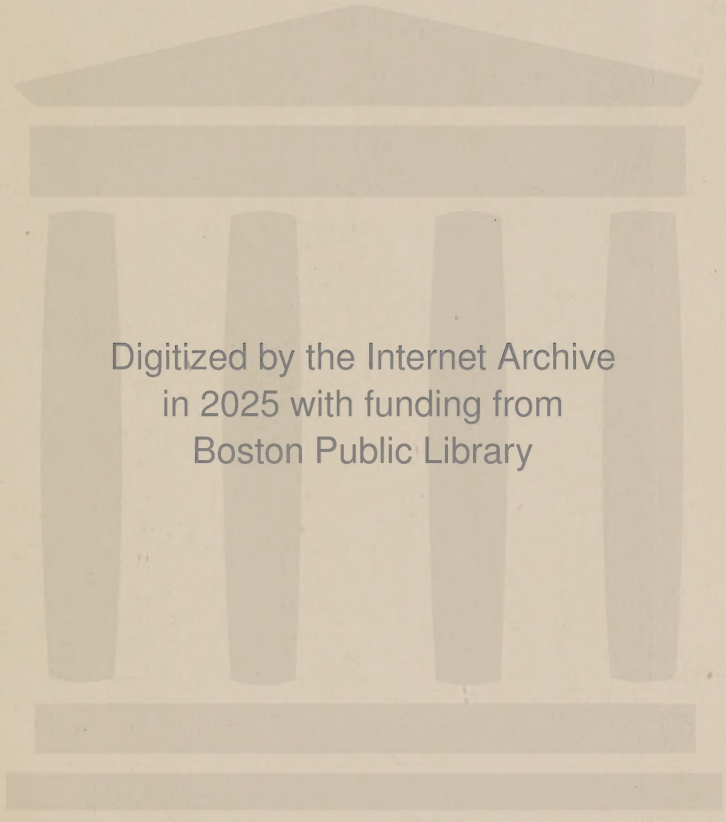
THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY

A Memoir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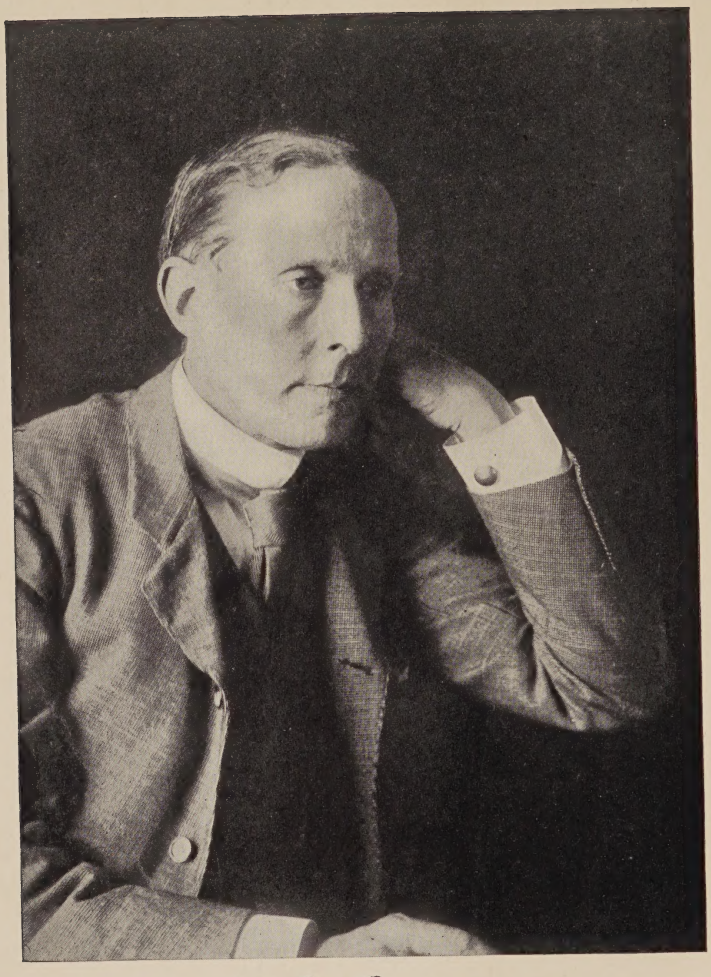

L. S. Perry.

THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY

A Memoir

BY
JOHN T. MORSE, JR.

With Illustrations

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PREFACE

Long ago (June, 1906), in a letter from Perry to me, occurs the following passage: 'That tone reminds me of obituaries; why didn't you send me yours on H. C.? You are so jealous of my lugubrious skill that you do not let me see your handiwork. The fact is, we shall have to bury these differences, and form a Trust; and since neither of us would ever be satisfied with the other's treatment, we must, as thoughtful persons, going down the gentle but accelerating slope, make provision for what must happen. Each of us shall write his own obituary, put it in some convenient spot (say, under the library clock), and at the proper moment it will be published, signed with the other's initials. Any extravagant praise — I am now speaking of *your* notice — will be taken for an ebullition of a loving heart. That would be the best way, the only way, to avoid dissensions between the two families; for if either of us got going about the other, telling what he knows ——!!'

I regret to say that the ingenious scheme was never carried to fulfillment. And thus it happens that I am sadly cast for the task of writing the memoir, which probably would not satisfy him and certainly will not satisfy me. He was the dearest friend I have ever had; our friendship dates back,

not indeed quite to boyhood, but to the years when we were both young and entering upon active life. It has been, I believe, as intimate as a friendship well can be. For long, long years, during all the periods that we were both in Boston, we passed at least an hour together in chat literally *every day*; and in summer, we exchanged letters with almost equal regularity. If I could write about him as well as I knew him, all would go well with my task — much better than it will go. Let me add a word of apology: I have earnestly tried to keep myself out of the manuscript; to suppress the odious word 'I'; to write as most biographers write when they have not at all, or only slightly, known their subject. But with all my endeavors I have been imperfectly successful. For the lapses I can only apologize.

J. T. M., Jr.

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THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY

CHAPTER I

YOUTH

Thomas Sergeant Perry was born at Newport, Rhode Island, January 23, 1845, in the old Champlin house, a handsome colonial mansion which had belonged to his paternal ancestors. His father, Christopher Grant Perry, was the son of the Commodore Perry who won the naval battle on Lake Erie in the War of 1812. An uncle was the other Commodore Perry who drew Japan from her self-imposed seclusion into the society of nations. His mother, Frances Sergeant, belonged to the old family of that name in Philadelphia, and through her he was the great-great-grandson, by direct descent, of Benjamin Franklin. Traces of the features of this distinguished progenitor were easily seen in him; and, what was of more consequence, a marked likeness in mental qualities also. Thus, his ready wit certainly came straight from Franklin, and not less distinctive though less important was his eager interest in every bit of mechanical ingenuity which came in his way. That the facial resemblance was not attributed only by fanciful and complimentary friends is shown by a rather odd fact. Once when he

was applying for his passport, the official, scanning his features, began to show unusual interest, and soon said: 'Why, you bear a singular resemblance to the likenesses of Benjamin Franklin!' 'Not altogether so strange,' said Perry, and admitted the relationship. With even a smaller percentage than he actually had of the brain and features of Franklin, he might well rest satisfied with his inheritance.

Of his boyhood there is little sufficiently noteworthy to be narrated. He evidently passed pleasant years and made very good friends, whom in later life he liked kindly to recall. Perhaps he came near to following the maritime career of his male ancestry. When he was a little chap, seven or perhaps eight years of age, his uncle, the 'Japanese Commodore,' came to say good-bye to his mother before setting out on a famous voyage. Tom came into the room and his uncle asked him if he would like to ship as cabin-boy. 'May I, Mother?' said the young one, and his eyes opened wide. He ran out of the room and in a few moments returned with a bulging carpet-bag ready to start at once. He often laughed over his bitter disappointment, but the important result of it was that the Franklin element in his composite temperament had opportunity to gain predominance.

Newport in those days was a picturesque little seaport with Revolutionary reminiscences and with traits quite peculiar to itself. It was the nearest approach that we had to a fashionable watering place,

THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY
As a schoolboy

and thus during the warm months it drew a varied gathering of notable persons, especially many of the rich Southern planters with their families. Perry had thus before his young eyes a cosmopolitan society not to be seen elsewhere in the States. He was quick-witted and observant, and the scene was not thrown away upon him, though few definite memories remain. One of these was the story of what he used to call his 'first love affair.' The object of the little fellow's sentimental attachment was none other than a married lady! Mrs. Middleton of the well-known South Carolina family; she is remembered as being not only fair to look upon, but also as having the rare charm of manners which marked the Southern ladies of that time and fascinated Northern gentlemen of more mature years than Tom's. He was then a scholar at a 'dame-school,' kept by a Miss Sukey S., and to her he confided his absorbing passion and sought her counsel. He wanted to send to his fair lady some token of his love, and between him and Miss Sukey it was decided that he should make as beautiful a copy as he could of the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, to which by his own suggestion he added the once delectable 'Lost, one golden hour.' The scheme was carried out, and the lady received the unusual tribute as graciously as a lady should.

Another story relates quite a different development of chivalry. Tom had an older brother,

Oliver, a gallant and dashing young lad, in strong contrast to Tom's more quiet and retiring ways, and whom Tom very greatly admired. Usually Tom was circumspect and prudent, as his shrewd little head dictated; but on one occasion Oliver approached him with a piece of soap in his hand and demanded that Tom should eat it. Trouble ensued, with the result that it was Oliver who swallowed the unusual dish, and thereafter Tom was treated with more respect than is usually paid to one of his years. In later life, on one or two occasions, he exhibited the like qualities with similar results.

Tom was so near-sighted in his boyhood as to be handicapped in some boyish sports, but he excelled in all nautical matters. He became an expert surf-swimmer, and while still only a lad he was one of two persons who were allowed by the beach-guardians at Newport to go, at will, outside the safety ropes into the big rollers. Thus he saved more than one person from probable drowning. He became also an expert sailer of boats. Besides this fitness for sport, his lively wit was already beginning to dart out, and his kindliness and companionable qualities made him popular. So he made friends whom long afterwards he liked to remember and speak of, and some of whom he held through life. Notably was this the case with Henry James, the novelist, and with his elder brother William, the famous philosopher. Further anticipating the years to come, he already began to de-

vour books, the boy of whom in later years Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, 'He is the best-read man whom I have ever met' — and he kept on reading still more books for long years after the remark was made.

But if, as has been made manifest by the foregoing, not many traditions remain to tell us with any vividness what sort of boy Tom was, we are sure at least of one trait as to which there can be no doubt — he certainly was a merry one! It was a distinguishing quality set deep in his character — a genial and most attractive one. In middle age, even in old age, he still preserved a light-hearted gaiety of disposition which most of us leave behind with our school, or at best with our college, days. With him, however, the spring of gay and lively spirits gushed eternal. And be it said also that his merriment was always cordial, kindly, and sympathetic. He never teased, never made fun of any one, never in his life uttered a word that could give pain — the most considerate of men! He could easily have been keen and sarcastic, but he would not. With him it was always the spontaneous up-bubbling of humor pleasantly mingled with good-will. Intertwined with this was his remarkable histrionic capacity. Nothing pleased him more than for a few moments to enact some part; — thus he would enter the room, not as T. Perry, whom we expected, but as an old Jew, or a silver-tongued salesman, or seductive humbug, or what not. When

this mood took him, he was irresistibly amusing in any one of various rôles — a comedian for our especial benefit, often better than any whom we went to the theatre to see. We who used to see him in these outbursts felt no doubt that, had chance led him to the stage, he would have won great fame in 'character parts.' I sometimes wonder how he avoided this destination. He must have been aware that it was within his reach, and, moreover, that he would have heartily enjoyed it. Of course it was hardly so dignified as it was to be a great scholar, and this latter call was the more powerful; but the lighter and the gayer one surely must have held a temptation. Whatever one can do better than any one else can, one must sometimes feel the ambition to do. Of course he was very fond of good acting, and especially enjoyed with keen appreciation the French stage. With what rapture he used to talk about it! The sound of his enthusiastic voice still rings in my ears when he would dilate to me — which I think that he did much more than only a paltry hundred times — about the performance of that wonderful, that marvelous, that indescribable play, 'Les Caprices de Marianne,' as this was acted in the late '60s by Madeleine Brohan, Got, and Bressant. He alleged it to be certainly the finest play that ever was presented in Paris; and how pleased he was when such a judge as Colonel Henry Lee once expressed agreement with this opinion. His eyes danced when he told me

of this valuable corroboration of his enthusiasm, for evidently he had previously been suspicious that his ardor might be exciting my amusement rather than my sympathy. But Fate led him not to the boards, and so far as I know he never took part even in private theatricals; I think that his modesty or shyness prevented his ever letting his ability become known. The only exception was in the little matter of a few private burlesques in his youth executed in collaboration with his friends Storey, Ben Peirce, Stratton, and Curtis. These dramatic frolics of those lively days he always recalled with an infinite glee which never abated. De Quincey's Autobiographic Sketches have attractive opening chapters, but Perry could have turned out a far better volume, and it is a thousand pities that he did not.

The winter of 1859–60 he passed at the plantation on the 'Bayou Têche' in Louisiana, owned by a Southern lady, Mrs. Porter, who was a friend of his family. Here he had a good opportunity for noting, in his usual observant fashion, the ways of life of those Southern planters and slaveholders who were soon to pass from the face of the earth. His serious labor at this time lay in the mastery of the Greek verbs, and in so doing it was his habit to keep repeating the conjugations aloud until he had them by heart. A little darky girl, some six years of age, was wont to steal up and watch him intently during this singular and puzzling process, and what

was his amazement one day to overhear the child repeating to herself much of what she had heard him say. Amused, he gave her a little more instruction and soon had her quite perfect in the conjugations. But what was the astonishing result? Why, nothing else than that, as the droll accomplishment of the little child became known, a warning notice was sent to Mrs. Porter by the alarmed planters, her neighbors, to the purport that a guest under her roof was engaged in the dangerous, the dreaded, the unlawful business of *educating the negroes!* and so the poor little black girl was stopped short upon the very threshold of learning.

At the age of sixteen and one half years he passed his examination for admission to Harvard College, as a member of the class of 1866. His undergraduate career developed no noteworthy incident, so far as I know. In his studies he acquitted himself creditably, and in the classical and literary departments especially he laid in goodly equipment. Nor did he fail to find time also for those collegiate amusements which are an important element though not mentioned in the curriculum. But the most valuable thing which he brought away with him lay in sundry lifelong and intimate friendships, of which the most notable were with Moorfield Storey and Charles E. Stratton, Professor James Mills Peirce and his younger brother Ben Peirce, and with William G. Tiffany, T. Hamp-

den Robb, and Dr. John Curtis of New York, friendships which never lapsed so long as life lasted. Of course no history remains of these years; no legends, no records, save a few letters written by Tom to his sister, Mrs. John La Farge. These bubble over with drollery, humor, and high spirits, but naturally hold nothing of especial interest, nothing quotable. I may, however, say that in a long life, conversant with multitudes of Harvard graduates, I have heard few indeed who have talked with such joyous reminiscence of their undergraduate days as did the men of this group.

Moorfield Storey, in writing of these good and dear old college days, has borne his hearty and eloquent testimony, in these touching words: 'In close sympathy with us was another rare man, Thomas S. Perry, whom I learned to know in the latter part of the Freshman year, and who has been at my side in every emergency ever since, always ready to do all that a friend could do, helping me in my griefs and sharing my joys, an essential part of my life. Born with a genius for friendship, with a wonderful power for reading and remembering good books, the wittiest man in conversation and in writing that I ever knew, he has known and been appreciated by the best of his contemporaries, and happily for us all still remains to make us happy.'

Also the same gentleman again says: 'The morning of Class Day it was announced that I was the first scholar for the year, so I graduated in a blaze

of glory; and I remember that Tom Perry told me that, when he heard the news, he cried. It showed what his friends have always known, how warm-hearted and affectionate he was.'

Having thus failed in childhood to get aboard ship with his uncle, and having later passed four pleasant years in acquiring such modicum of learning as was then to be gathered at Harvard, Perry had next to determine what should be the serious work of his life. He was not much puzzled, for beneath all his gaiety there had lurked a potent inborn taste and a fixed purpose; he wanted to make himself a *real scholar* — an animal at that time hardly known in the United States. The longing was in his nature, and there could be no mistake. The necessary training was to be had only in Europe; so to Europe he went as soon as he could arrange his plans. French and German scholars were then reputed to be the most erudite, and accordingly he arranged to divide his time between France and Germany. The years thus passed ought to constitute an interesting period, but concerning it unfortunately no picturesque memoranda exist. After his arrival abroad, and before beginning work, there was time for a little travelling which took the shape of a very delightful visit to Spain, before the season of lectures opened. Thereafter he settled down to very serious study and the rigorous note-taking of the lecture rooms. He

worked hard, for his heart was in his work; he enjoyed much because the capacity for enjoyment was strong within him; between the two he gained what we call 'cultivation.' Valuable personal intimacies it was hardly possible for a foreign student to make. But it is remembered that he was very hospitably received by Grimm, the famous writer, with whom he passed at least one evening every week.

When he thought that he had lived this life long enough, he returned to his own country with an equipment in the way of scholarship not likely to be surpassed by any at home. Of course Greek and Latin, German and French were familiar tongues for him; but to these he added also the more unusual accomplishment of Sanskrit. In Europe he had the high honor of being made a member — the youngest member — of the Oriental Society. Further, he was a past master of his own language, which was — and is — by no means too common an accomplishment in this enfranchised land. Also, further, he was more or less familiar with all the most advanced researches and theories of the classical scholars of Europe. Thus altogether he was bringing to the American market what commercial men would call a 'well-assorted line of goods.' What sort of market was he to find? What use or demand for his wares? Naturally, his most probable customer was his old Alma Mater, Harvard University, and there he accepted

a tutorship in French and German. Indeed, before he went abroad it had been tacitly understood that upon his return he should have the position. The term of office then ran for life, but he somewhat unadvisedly threw it over by resigning when he was offered and accepted the editorship of the 'North American Review.' He did it well — in fact, so well that the New York 'Nation' said that the venerable periodical had never been so well edited before. But when financial exigencies compelled a new arrangement to be made by the owners of the 'Review,' Perry resigned his position and returned again, this time as an instructor, to Harvard. His friend, James Russell Lowell, who had brought him the offer said, apologetically, that of course it was far beneath his merits, but that it might be useful temporarily for making a livelihood. This position he held for five years, acting at the same time as correspondent for the London 'Academy.' His lectures in the department of English literature were very popular with the students, so much so that a larger hall had to be allotted to him. Was his success perhaps a little too marked to be altogether agreeable to certain other persons in the University? It was suggested; but be this as it may, and concerning ourselves only with facts, we have to record that after a while Perry's relations with Harvard University were definitively severed, and strangely enough just at the very time when his great value was being so conspicuously proved.

THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY
At twenty-five

On April 9, 1874, Perry was married to Lilla Cabot, daughter of Samuel Cabot, a distinguished surgeon in Boston. She had just emerged from a very merry and spirited girlhood, when he first met her, but he had the perception to see in her the intellectual qualities which later on were to make her a brilliant woman in society both at home and abroad — her poetry and much more her painting having long since won for her distinction. Intellectually she was in her way quite the equal of him in his way, and while they were very unlike, they sympathetically supplemented each other. He could not write a sonnet or paint a picture, but when she did both these things he appreciated fully the beauty and the value of her achievement. She could not read Sanskrit, nor (I think) Greek; but she could admire his learning, she could criticise his work, and — what was more important — she could often stimulate him to effort. Each rejoiced in the reputation and the accomplishments of the other, and sympathetic appreciation acted as a stimulus without rivalry. Her opinion — what she would think and say — always lurked in the back of his head while he worked and spurred him to a little extra care and effort, which, in good truth, his temperament made very desirable. So they were a couple whom any one, at least who was not a mathematician, would describe as an equation of dissimilars — a rare spectacle but effective of results.

It is pleasant to reproduce the letter written by James Russell Lowell to Miss Cabot, to congratulate her on the engagement.

PARIS, *6th June*, 1873

MY DEAR LILLA,

As we both love you very much, we were both highly pleased with the good news you sent us, and with your thinking of us in your happiness. I will not wish you joy, for I am sure you are having it in full measure, but as you are good enough to make me a kind of father by brevet, I give you my approval and blessing with all my heart.

By this time you are tossing your curls and colouring as you are wont (and very becoming it is too, by the way), and saying, 'Plague on the old gentleman! Why doesn't he say something about Tom?' For the very good reason that I do not mean to begin spoiling him so early. Not that I couldn't say enough good of him if I would, both from what I know myself and from others, but I look upon your having chosen him as a compliment quite as high as any I could pay him, and as much as he can stand under the circumstances. You know he will be looking over your shoulder as you read, and that you will think it the nicest thing in the world, instead of resenting it as you would a month ago. However, I will unbend so far as to say that I think very highly of him both for brains and character — the main elements of a good husband.

As for his good looks, I leave them to be quarrelled over between himself and his glass, as with the rest of us. Perhaps, as I am growing stout and gray, I might be a trifle difficult on this head. On the other hand, I am willing to tell *him* (confound his impertinence in wanting you all to himself!) that he has got a pearl of a wife, with qualities that will wear to the end and grow brighter for the wearing. I send you a dozen kisses just to plague him, with the express understanding that they are to be applied by myself whenever I come home. I wish I might be at the wedding (as a returned pilgrim I should be sure to have an old shoe to fling after you) — but I suppose I can hardly hope it. Nevertheless, I begin to look forward rather than back, as I did at first, now that my first year is nearly over.

Oddly enough my head was full of you when your letter came, for I had lain awake the night before, and among my other sins remembered that I had not yet answered your delightful burst of sympathy about the grandson. I should have written you at any rate. By the way, I shall be a D.C.L. by the time you get this (I wear my gown at Oxford on the 19th) and you will attach all the more importance to what I say. I am sorry I didn't think to tell you of it at the outset — but you can turn back and read all over again under this new illumination. We are just packing to leave Paris on our way to the Low Countries. I shall leave your Aunt Fanny at Ghent while I run over to England.

Then we shall go through Holland to the Rhine, and so to Switzerland. In the autumn to Italy and golden joys. Our winter here has been very agreeable and you would be delighted to see how Madame enjoys everything and profits by it. She is grown very stout and handsome on her repose. She sends her best love and would even, I believe, let you kiss her, if you were here. I am very happy in your happiness, my dear Lilla. I was just going to say that you have just had the most delightful experience that life can give. But you haven't. No, that comes later. The best of all is to be in love at fifty-four. Those odious numerals escaped me unawares and have betrayed me. I meant to say 'after forty.' However, I stand by it and affirm that a woman is never so charming as at the precise age of a lady who is sitting opposite me studying a French phrasebook with a frown on her face which would vanish if she looked at me, though if she knew what I was writing she would box my ears soundly.

We both send our heartiest love and congratulations. Write me whenever there is a day fixed, or the talk of it. Give our best regards to Mr. Perry and tell him that if he takes you away from our part of the world, I will review the first book he writes and hint that he would be better for knowing a little Sanscrit.

Yours always lovingly

J. R. L.

Forthwith after the wedding they hired a small house in Boston and began housekeeping in a modest way. There was money enough for comfort, but no surplus for display. None the less they led a very happy life, as young people can, even though luxuries may be scarce. Clever and agreeable friends were always dropping in, dining, chatting, sitting up to terrible hours of the night, leading just that fascinating life of youth and gay spirits which many a writer of biography or of novels has sketched. It is indeed a pleasant picture which we have to look upon: those young men, all with good brains, full of high hopes and hónorable ambitions, some of them destined to brilliant success, none to go down in real failure, working hard, very hard, all day, and coming together for long social evenings of good talk. All of them were poor, or nearly so; they smoked pipes, instead of Havana cigars, and quaffed their beer instead of champagne. But they heartily enjoyed life. Withal they were sensible, sound-headed men. Do not yield to any foolish impulse to call them 'Bohemians'; they would have rebelled against the stale word, and would as soon have stuck feathers in their hair and daubed their faces and called themselves Indian chiefs. They were simply honest, genuine young fellows, with aspiring aims in life and the capacity to carry them out.

But amid all the pleasure it was of course the case that the pot must be kept boiling, and some-

thing must be put into the pot, and there must be a fire under the pot. To provide these things, Perry must work, and so during these years he certainly did, industriously. When not occupied at Harvard he was busy with his pen, and very busy. The salaries which he drew from the Treasury of the University, so long as they continued, were little better than insignificant, and other sources of supply were desirable, if not actually essential. It was matter of course that he should turn to literary work, and for a time his enterprises in this line followed each other with an amazing fecundity.

It has been said that for a year he edited the 'North American Review.' During a long series of years he was on the staff of the 'Atlantic Monthly,' for which he wrote all the notices and reviews of foreign books, also occasionally contributing articles. For the New York 'Nation' he was long in charge of the reviews of works of fiction, writing also other articles, and all the while doing no small amount for other publications. In 1877 he published, by permission of the author, his translation, *via* the French and German versions, of Turgenieff's 'Virgin Soil'; and this he later followed by more. In 1881, in fulfillment of an engagement, he published the 'Life and Letters of Dr. Francis Lieber,' which was afterward translated for publication in Germany. In 1883 he published 'English Literature in the Eighteenth Century,' translated into French in 1887. In 1884 followed the book

'From Opitz to Lessing.' In 1888 came his 'History of Greek Literature,' which was and remained his most important work. In the same year, 'The Evolution of the Snob.' Besides all this original work he brought out translations of several French books, notably of the volumes of Saint-Amand's French biographies and memoirs, which were then very popular in France.

Like pretty much all aspirants in the field of serious letters, he harvested only a scanty crop of dollars, a crop quite inadequate to his hopes if not to his anticipations. It was the old familiar story. When a great scholar, after years of preparation, puts the fruit of his toil upon the counters of the booksellers, he finds that the public is very likely to leave it there scantly disturbed. It is too weighty to be picked up and carried home for amusement. So Perry was badly disappointed. We find him writing to a friend that his fifth book is about to appear, after four predecessors of which 'none had achieved real success.' This was pathetic, for he had the mental outfit for doing work of the very best quality, and evidently he was getting prematurely discouraged. The deplorable result was that he ceased to produce just about at the time when he ought really to have been beginning to produce. It was the disappointment of his life. Were his feelings, though natural, quite right? It is a fair question. If he had seen fit to provide a book intended for the cultivated few, had he any right

to be dissatisfied because the imperfectly cultivated many did not invest their dollars in the purchase? And this was substantially the real case. When he offered to business men, and their equally busy wives, for their evening relaxation after an industrious day, a volume on 'Greek Literature' or 'From Opitz to Lessing,' he had hardly any good right to be vexed because some more frivolous and entertaining literature was preferred. The scholars, the literary class, were more hospitable and as matter of fact they were highly appreciative; but they were not sufficiently numerous to bring a large cheque from the publishers. So in fact, after due weight was given to all comforting suggestions, the practical fact remained, that he was not making the money which he would have found convenient.

In this connection we have to face the fact that while Perry was a man of great intellectual ability, which he industriously used for the accumulation of a vast mass of knowledge, he was really somewhat inclined to rest content with the mere possession. He had not that impulse to impart which most accumulators have. He was inclined to be contented with merely having it. He wanted to possess, but he felt no eagerness to parade his possession. As I used to contemplate him, it seemed to me that I saw in him a piece of most exquisite machinery, infinitely ingenious, most delicately and perfectly fashioned, which might be expected to turn out wonderful products — but which did not.

Why? Well, because critical examination made visible the unfortunate fact that the great mechanician who had so beautifully framed this wonderful machine had neglected to put into it an adequate driving-wheel. That driving-wheel would have been called ambition. 'By that sin fell the angels,' and Perry, thus forewarned by Wolsey, certainly avoided it, much too successfully. He cared absolutely nothing for fame; he had no desire to be a distinguished man. He wrote anonymously at times; he kept himself out of sight and in fact he almost seemed not to want to have a reputation. Knowledge and learning were *per se* grand possessions; he reached out and got them; but thereafter to use them for the increase of his own magnification was entirely outside of his aspirations. Was this wrong? Was it an imperfection in his make-up? There may be two opinions on the subject. His friends regretted it; they would have had him reach out and take that which was justly his own. But what profit is it to wish that a man should be different from what he is? No human being creates himself, neither selects the qualities with which he will go through life. So when the creative power, whatever it may be, packed certain qualities into Perry, if it left out ambition — as it certainly did! — the consequences of the omission were not his fault, though he had to take the consequences of it. It is only justice to say that all the tasks which were definitely set to him in life, he did faithfully; all the

very praiseworthy tastes which were implanted in him, he fully pushed to admirable results. Every affirmative and obvious duty which he was fitted to perform, he did perform. It was only when it became a matter of sending his name down, through perhaps half a dozen generations to come, as a learned scholar, that he felt no incentive, no call of duty; he remained silent. It is to lament but not to blame.

CHAPTER II

PERSONAL TRAITS

I. WIT — TALK — CORRESPONDENCE

PERRY was well known as a man of brilliant wit — a very indefinite statement, since wit, like color, is of infinite variety and does not submit to description. To begin by a discard: he decidedly was not one of your story-tellers with an insufferable procession of facetious tales, to be punctuated by weary laughter. Neither was he 'such a funny man,' who keeps his hearers politely giggling when they would prefer to yawn. Still less was he on the lookout to say some sharp or cutting thing; for though he had great satiric power, he used it cautiously and considerately. His wit was simply dropped into the talk, sprinkled through it. It was the inspiration of the moment, interjected, without ever interrupting the flow of the conversation. It was like dew on the grass under sunshine; it made the whole talk sparkle with brilliance. Often it rose to the highest level of quaint or picturesque humor of that quality which makes men famous. One of his greatest pleasures was to have 'a good talk,' into which his humor fitted at intervals in the most companionable way. With what gusto would he utter those droll, shrewd words, like an epicure gloating over a delicious

dish! So, of course, it goes without saying that he talked charmingly. In a long life I have met but one man who was his equal, and that was Oliver Wendell Holmes. Perhaps, so far as can be judged from printed records, Sydney Smith was a third of the same type or school — properly so called, for there was quite a thread of likeness between the three men.

To say of a man that he is witty and humorous is not always taken to indicate intellectual power. But Perry very justly took a different view. Once, remarking that a paper about Jews by Mark Twain was 'full of wisdom,' he said: 'The test of humor is the amount of wisdom it contains. In fact it is hard to conceive of real humor without a burden of wisdom' — how clever is that 'burden' of wisdom.

Further, Perry was a master of the whole very delicate science of words, and always picked up with unfailing skill the one he needed. In shaping his expression he was perfect, and in the detail of correct pronunciation he was critical. He detested slang, save on rare, special occasions of usefulness; he never sought to invigorate his sentences by swearing, considering it to be the same bad form in talk that italics are in writing; nor ever condescended to make his wit popular by coarseness. In his view, talking was as much one of the Fine Arts as was music or painting, and to be studied and respected accordingly. So far as the range of his talk

went, it seemed all-embracing. It was an unusual quality of his mind that all information, simply as being such, seemed to interest him; trifles were not too small; neither were important matters and perplexing topics to be turned aside. All was grist that came to his mill. He would discuss the Gillette Safety Razor (a very favorite instrument with him), or the most learned works of his scholarly friends, Salomon Reinach or Professor George F. Moore, not all in the same vein certainly, but with almost equal appreciation, — a preëminently catholic mind.

It should be said to his credit that he did not resemble most famous talkers in a tendency to absorb the conversation. He 'talked fair,' though it used to be matter of chaff between him and me, that neither allowed the other a chance to speak; — a dispute which was never settled. To this he refers in the following characteristic letter: he was speaking of a newspaper writer who (in his opinion) wrote a great deal too much: 'I think it very probable that he is driven to this course by finding, whenever he goes into the world and tries to associate with his kind, that he has no opportunity to speak, that his dear friends talk and talk, and then he, poor fellow, goes home and writes two or three volumes — I regret to say that while the foregoing paragraph was drying, L. [Mrs. Perry] looked over my shoulder and said that she sympathized with *your* point of view. She insists upon my communi-

cating this statement to you. I have done so. But you have, you must have, a conscience. She adds, in the most offensive way, that she is obliged at times to talk outside because she can find no chance at home. But I will not pursue these recriminations further.' I regret to say that the like insinuation was frequently renewed both in speech and in his letters. It was a matter for his conscience!

The reservoir thus constantly drawn upon by talk was not less constantly replenished by reading. Perry's capacity in this direction I shall make no effort to describe, because any real description which I could make I should be obliged contemptuously to turn aside as absurd. Let the reader set his imagination at work, and when he has pushed it to the uttermost limit, let him rest assured that it falls far short of the reality. One of those readers whom the world calls 'omnivorous' could hardly read in a week as much as Perry could read in a day. The process defies explanation; defies it even as a mere physical act of eyesight. His glance went through a book like the X-ray. In the language of legislators: he could 'read' a book 'by the title.' He could pick up a volume, turn a few pages here and there with nimble fingers, and, presto! he could tell you all its contents. I do not expect any one who reads this statement to believe it; but it is strictly true. Newspapers he read in the same manner, by a glance; and he read them without number, especially those of the United States and

France; those of England somewhat, and of other countries in a much less degree. The one domain of the human intellect which he never seemed to care much to explore lay in metaphysics. Even the profound writings of his dear friend, the philosopher William James, really interested him only for the sake of the writer. He wrote to me once: 'Besides blackberrying I have been reading William James's "Some Problems of Philosophy," his last (latest) book and I have had no success with that. I can make nothing out of it, and any one who can teach me to distinguish precepts from concepts, can teach my hens the same thing. But every now and then comes a flash of delightful talk.' In daily intercourse, however, the 'delightful talk' carried the day over the incomprehensible philosophy, and the two men rejoiced much in their social chat.

To some extent, also, history was turned aside by Perry. Yet while half-humorously reviling it, he read a great deal of it and enormously of biography, and his criticisms certainly indicated no small measure of interest. In fact there was a little inconsistency here, and his behavior hardly made good his words. His admiration for his friend, John Fiske, and his writings, was without bounds. He also very greatly admired Macaulay, though perhaps it was Macaulay's literary ability, his fascinating style, his assumption of knowing everything, which attracted Perry. Of Gibbon he said: 'A straight reading of Gibbon I find as exhausting as

marching in an unending procession. I like to dip into him here and there and in fact I like to take the historian's material and chew it up, myself — but I don't want to kill historians or to burn their works.'

All this alleged contempt and distrust for the chronicler's craft seemed to me to be in some degree assumed. Part of its attraction was that it was a good basis for saying some very brilliant and satirical things. When he demanded that an historian should be no partisan, he might have reflected that it would be just as reasonable in his beloved domain of art to demand that a great painter should belong to no school or age; or he might with equal propriety have insisted that a great statesman should belong to no party. Of course he was clever enough to see this; but it was the making the assault that amused him. Of history, more generally, he once wrote: 'I am sorry your sister-in-law is distressed by my lack of historical sense. Of course what I really [intended] to discuss is the methods of historical writing. Of late the writers have followed the "wider movement," but they have become, it seems to me, rather dogmatic about their business and inclined to lay down laws on the scientific method, which seem to me very narrow and incomplete.... It [history] bears a resemblance to philosophy (which is, I take it, the aspect the universe takes to a man who tries to explain it) in the multiplicity of its relations to human beings,

etc., etc. What it shall teach depends mainly on the teacher. Greek history can teach the benefits of aristocracy or the splendours of democracy according to the book you read. The French Revolution is also two-edged.'

It would be fair to say that in Perry's more judicial moments or perhaps with the gentleness of declining years, he in time somewhat abated his abuse of the historians. But their junior brethren, the biographers, he was apt to arraign with some severity. I think, however, that this often amusing derogation was really provoked by the modern fashion of 'perpetuating' the memory of any worthy citizen, deceased, in one or even two octavo tomes appropriate to the memory of a Washington or Napoleon. Such tomes Perry passed with a shrug. On the other hand, the really good biographies, especially the auto-biographies, the Diaries, the collections of letters, he devoured with avidity. For example, most of us read some of Horace Walpole's letters; but Perry read every line of all those volumes, with intense delight; and so with shelves full of less famous and less readable collections. It was the original writing which enchained him — the genuine likeness of the writer, ingenuously portrayed. Only what one worthy citizen thought it wise or polite to say about another who happened to have died he did not much care for.

Speaking to Mrs. Walter Gay of 'Il Fuoco' and

thanking her for sending it, he says: 'It is certainly a curious book; there is something colossal about the image of himself that he has formed in his mind and communicated to an eager world. It's not given to every one to take himself so seriously. But after all his opinion about himself is a trifling matter and I pardon him without hesitation. How he *does* write! What a picture, what a panorama he gives of our beloved Venice! It is really wonderful the power he has of portraying that heavenly spot. It's not often that one gets the impression of beauty so clearly conveyed through beautiful words.'

He remarks of another book (November 29, 1900): 'It is a book to read aloud. The ancients always read everything aloud, as in fact the uncultivated, and the cultivated, Japanese now do, singing the text to themselves. The adapting the style to the reader's ear explains much of its artifice. I never thought of this before, though it's obvious enough. For instance, page 364 is like music. He is a wonderful master. His love-words do not disturb me because there is no doubt where his heart is fixed; he will be constant to his notions of *himself*. He is a clever wretch and you were most kind to send the book.'

In the epistolary art Perry certainly bows to no superior in this country and salutes few equals in Europe — and even these few all belong to bygone times. He was never more completely happy in the situation than when he was seated at his table, pen

in hand, having before him one of those sheets of blank paper which most of us find so discomfiting. What he did was simply to *talk on paper;* there was only the trifling substitution of a pen for a tongue. Great was the variety upon each sheet; earnest for ten lines; humorous for the next dozen; ideas, opinions, thoughts, jests, stories, facts, seemed to drip off his pen as it moved rapidly — sometimes too rapidly for the comfort of the reader — over the paper. He was never dull, never trifling, never long drawn out. All was spontaneous; no forethought dulled his words; he simply sat at his desk and wrote to you precisely as he would have dropped into the opposite easy-chair and talked to you.

If these letters are so wonderful, why do I not give them instead of maundering over the paper on my own account? A fair query, if impolite, Mr. Reader; *rem acu tetegisti;* there's indeed the rub. It's a delicate business to make public a man's personal letters. Horace Walpole prepared his and therefore it was right to publish them just as he left them. But that was an unusual case. How would most of us feel if we knew that all the chatter which we pour forth carelessly or confidentially to a friend who understands our allusions and the mood in which we write were to be handed out to any chance reader? Perry used frequently in writing to me to refer to the time when I should be editing his letters; but this was always in jest. The only time

he ever touched upon the subject in an apparently serious vein, it was quite to the opposite purport. He said then that letters should not ever be preserved: 'read and burn.' And again (August 27, 1905): 'I think it better to destroy letters. They serve their purpose, more or less; then we store them carefully, but we never re-read them — except very rarely — and then they only inflict anguish. They *ought* to be burned as soon as possible. The modern habit of printing them is the devil!' This is not quite so appalling as the anathema, 'and cursed be he who moves my bones'; yet it may make — has made — me pause and think. But the world has long since and many times, by its supreme judgment, decided the question the other way. Moreover, there is certainly no intrinsic objection in the letters themselves to induce one to think twice before printing them. It is, however, amusing to find that one gentleman (name unknown, or suppressed) would apparently have acted differently. I received one day from Perry this: — 'At this point I receive a letter which contains these words: "You are accustomed to write letters that have a certain amount of finesse and verve in them; but of late I notice that your letters are dwindling in these qualities." He uses a typewriter, and so does not italicize the French words, but you too are old-fashioned and you can tell me: Have I lost finesse (rhyming with highness) and verve (rhymes with curve)? What amuses me is:

how such a letter (and it doesn't come from a newspaper editor, but from a fellow-sinner) is to be answered. I shall try to cram a great deal of *verve* into this letter; it is already crowded with *finesse;* — lest you should make the same felonious assault upon me. It is an awful (but doubtless deserved) blow to my foolish vanity.'

II. ENGLISH

In the English language Perry was a connoisseur and a stern champion for the good old tongue in its purity. To question his dictum was usually to incur smashing defeat, for rarely does one meet so infallible a critic. He was not meticulous or affected; but he loved and respected his mother tongue and therefore sought to guard it against the compromising advances of the half-educated. I remember being severely taken to task by him because in Charles Adams's life of C. F. Adams in the American Statesmen Series I had 'passed' the word 'voiced.' Rebuking me for this oversight, he wrote: 'Change is necessary in a language; but how much has English gained by the substitution of "loan" for "lend"? Shall I live to see "donate" take the place of "give"? . . . I am by no means a stickler for the old form, but some line is to be observed. Since I left America [he was writing from Japan] "win out" and "watch out" have appeared in newspapers, and thence *passim.* Mere vulgarity is not the best recommendation for new forms.' The

familiar 'back of' instead of 'behind' excited him to the danger point. He wrote to me one day: 'You say ——'s proof-reader is ignorant. Do you know one who isn't? In the July "Nineteenth Century" I saw yesterday: "Equally as horrible"! I know nothing equally as horrible!' Speaking of a clever young country lad who had gone from his neighborhood at Hancock, New Hampshire, to seek a collegiate education, he said: 'Perhaps it will surprise him that any one objects to "*quit* fishing." Is it perhaps a New Englandism? I never heard it till I came to Harvard, and then it frequently fell from the lips of rustic students. It always made my blood run cold. One sees it every day in the newspapers, which is enough to show its barbarism.'

June 15, 1921: He says that on the preceding day he had written a letter to a friend, 'who had sent [him] a notice commending a vulgarization of the Bible into modern everyday English. That blasphemy I could not understand. I waxed most indignant and really reproached him, civilly, with his horrid deed. Imagine having a classic of that value and degrading it into the current slipshod chatter. I reminded him that the Roman Catholic Church had given a good deal of comfort through an utterly unknown tongue. I am curious to see what he will say when the doctor lets him get out of bed and sit on the veranda with a pencil and a writing-pad. That is to say, if he ever writes to me

again. If he doesn't, I shall have lost my only admirer.'

October 4, 1921: 'If I were in town I should give you a long and touching address on the American degradation of the English language. Probably before many years the Knights of Columbus will be trying to oust the English language in favor of Gaelic, but meanwhile Americans are trying to adapt English into a jargon of their own. You have no idea how far this extends. Those huge selling journals are the leaders. All the stories, which are the only things every one reads, are written in a sort of demotic dialect, and certain critics rejoice in using the language of street ruffians. They think themselves *modern*, and take the same delight in it that a little boy does in his bad language when he is painfully learning to swear. I saw yesterday in a journal of the Authors' League: . . . "Lorrimer is not a blurby editor." "If he shall desire to make a blurb over his twenty-fifth anniversary." He "does not give a hoot what other editors think of him or his product. His imperative of writing is that it shall be interesting, but he does not delve about to find what interests the people." All this and indeed a bit more in one article of about three-quarters of an octavo page! You will understand it, however, when I tell you that G—— C—— is one of the vice-presidents of the League. One finds better writing in the trade journals of the plumbers, gas-fitters, and automobile repairers. I can assure you of this

because I often read them and find them wholly free from the self-conscious desire to strike a higher note in slang than any one else can reach. I restrain myself, but I could go on for some time; there is plenty of material to talk about. The "Sun" always kept up a good tradition about English. A paper I have been seeing a little of in these later days is carefully written, but the sentiments are often amusing. Almost every writer is duly impressed with the immense need of a revolution in this country. Fortunately they don't agree on the sort of revolution, and each one of them, of course, likes only his favorite. I wrote to one of them the other day that I hoped this multitude of revolutions would end in a mutual slaughter of the whole lot of theories. I haven't heard from him since and every night I go to bed expecting to be dynamited before daylight.'

In a word, it may be said that what may be called Americanized English was abhorrent to his classic taste. Why should it exist? Was not the old-time language equal to any demand? Why send a lame substitute to halt clumsily and vulgarly across the stage? Thus he waged a probably hopeless warfare. But after all he might be asked, what was the use of fighting at Bunker Hill and adopting the Declaration of Independence, if Americans can't have a language of their own?

To his friend Opdycke this accomplished scholar one day wrote this somewhat cryptic paragraph: 'I

am a hopeless Radical, a *Nihilist!* "Away with Greek" is my battle-cry. Style, I believe, should be an absolutely transparent medium 'twixt writer and reader, without harassing graces or charms — like perfect manners. That is the only ideal that I recognize.' This may be a somewhat mystical, not very practical, description of a style, and yet in a way it is suggestive. The iconoclastic outburst against Greek was no doubt humorous, and in a later letter to the same recipient he sent the antidote. He wrote that he had just been visiting Philadelphia, where he had seen with great pleasure upon some (probably private) stage a rendition of 'The Acharnians.' 'The play is a mere variety show — moral advice to the Athenians from Aristophanes, who held a position in that community not unlike that of C. Dana of the "Sun," in New York — a pernicious conservative. . . . There was much in it of the greatest interest. The acting was admirable.' In point of fact, Perry was especially fond of the Greek tragedians. Their fine language might be dead, but for this very reason it was at least safe from degradation.

III. PESSIMISM

Was Perry a pessimist? It is not a pleasant name, but I have heard the suggestion, and therefore it must be disposed of. Moreover, he himself often spoke of himself as 'a pessimist.' He was, in fact, pessimistically inclined in one direction. But to

any serious extent it was only in one direction; in all other respects he was generally cheerful and light-hearted. In this one direction, too, he found himself ensconced in a pretty numerous and a very goodly company. It was when he looked forth — as he did constantly and with profound interest — upon the political field in the United States that he undeniably was an outspoken pessimist; he would not have wished that it should be denied. He would fain have seen the grand and momentous games of statesmanship, domestic and foreign, played honorably and generously by and between gentlemen. He grieved when he beheld no such spectacle, but on the contrary saw only a mob composed chiefly of demagogues, and to be divided into two classes; those who were intelligent and dishonest and those who were dull-witted and honest. It was not a singular or a novel point of view, only whereas most intelligent and high-minded persons accepted it with gloomy endurance, Perry cried out loudly against it. So it came about that all those who did not want to be bothered with vexatious truths shrugged their shoulders and dubbed him a pessimist. They would have been more correct if they had called him an idealist. This, perhaps, he was, and therefore open to the dreadful charge of being 'impractical.' It is not worth while to pursue this discussion; only in a broad way it may be remarked that the world has been going on for a great while, that many schemes for governing have been

tried, that up to this date, no one of them has proved a brilliant success, that one or two centuries must elapse before it will be known whether our system of giving an equal vote and therefore power to every man and woman in the country is going to solve the great problem successfully or not. While it is on trial the comments of observers, whether favorable or critical, are in order, and indeed are to be welcomed. Perry, therefore, was doing better in speaking his views than he would have done by sitting in apparent contentment. As a specimen of his growlings the following will suffice:

December 27, 1898: 'As to our country, I despair. My only consolation is the knowledge that at all times the aspect and outlook of the world have been such as to sadden any thoughtful heart. Possibly the only exception was at the beginning of the French Revolution, and see what a mess they made of that! No, I am forming a system of philosophy, according to which the only folly is to expect anything but folly in the conduct of the world. It is meant to be stupid, and of course is stupid; that is normal and natural. That's the whole theory in a nutshell. What should surprise us is, that, these incontrovertible truths being granted, the world has done so well as it has done. There are alleviations — the *Temps* newspaper, a little music, a few pictures, very very occasionally a book; though if I were asked to name a few good ones the list would not be a long one. Then there are a few pleasant people.'

November 29, 1900: 'What I hear of Boston does not fill me with a longing to be there. Everybody has been getting more stupidly rich than ever, and I should say that there is a fabulous growth in vulgarity which promises ill for America where the supply was already abundant. Indeed, the prosperity of that country intoxicates the untrained hordes who have money to handle and no notion of its use except in vulgar display.'

CHAPTER III

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY: FRIENDSHIPS

May 13, 1900, Perry wrote: 'You are quite right in saying that probably I shan't yearn for Boston. . . . Well, you know what Boston is, and how they put you into a little box of assorted thoughts which you are compelled to think or go into exile. I prefer exile. Still Boston remains an amusing experience in one's life.'

This may be set down as one of those little irritable exclamatory outbursts, to which we are all liable, not expressing substantial conviction, yet holding an element of truth. In fact, Perry was really too cosmopolitan to be contented in any town which was not one of the world's great capitals. Boston held things of much value; it held many of his friends, for example; and it was familiar. One thing more it also held to which he was really deeply — one might almost say sentimentally — attached. It was an odd thing to excite tender feelings; it was not beautiful, or exactly companionable; it was the Boston Public Library.

It was to this unromantic object that, after severing his relations with Harvard, and practically withdrawing from productive work in literature,

Perry devoted his hours and really quite a section of his heart. 'The Public Library,' he wrote in 1898, 'is a great charm in Boston — the greatest.' He had an affection for all libraries, public or private, large or small; but for this one he had a loyal feeling which was almost like a personal attachment. For a while he held a salaried position and had a private room assigned to him. Later, after returning from a trip to Europe, he preferred to give his service without compensation. His usefulness can hardly be exaggerated. He knew thoroughly the conditions; that is to say: he knew in what departments the library was well equipped, and in what others it was deficient, and needed reënforcement. All the countless catalogues which poured in from publishers, booksellers, auctioneers all over the world, passed under his scrutiny; and it was his daily business, from these sources, to fill such lacunæ as existed. It was a task which could never be wholly finished and it called for an incredible familiarity with all that mass of printed material.

In the departments of special research, he was familiar with the merits of all the scholars and literary producers of Europe as well as of the United States. Fortunately for the library the labors which most persons would have performed only for a salary, he performed for sheer love of the work. Those who knew what he was doing were agreed that the value of his services toward

the library could not be overestimated, and the trail of his skill and wise influence may still be traced in every department. Of course he was fit for greater things; but as chance seemed to have thrown this in his way, and as his capacity for it almost seemed to make it take on the aspect of a duty, so he accepted it and faithfully performed it. Of course he was not seeking fame. Appreciation by intellectual men in Europe he already had, abundantly. European scholars had met him on common ground, recognized his acquirements, and when he was abroad they adopted him as one of their guild. When he was at home they corresponded with him. Such recognition by the really competent judges fully satisfied him, and with tranquil independence he proceeded to do what he chose. In 1894, when the removal of Mr. Griffin was in progress, he, as the phrase is, moved heaven and earth in a desperate struggle to retain so very able a man; he waxed bitter and used very strong language, but, unfortunately for the library, all his efforts were expended in vain. His judgment, however, was promptly vindicated by the readiness with which Mr. Griffin's services were engaged in the library at Washington. In 1905, on his return from Japan, he wrote: 'At the Public Library I found a state of criticism of their superiors that made me think of Russia. It seems that the Trustees are about to send all their medical books to the Boston Medical Library. That in a great library one should be un-

able to get a medical book seems to me strange. I see no reason for disintegrating the library. When they have given the law books to the Law Library; the scientific to Tech.; natural history volumes to the Natural History Museum; fine arts to Art Museum; classical to Harvard College; musical to Harvard Musical Association, they will have — a beautiful building, with room for many visitors. It seems to me the duty of a library to collect, not to scatter, books. But I am well known to be cantankerous and unreasonable.'

It is conventional to praise modesty; but in fact modesty is obviously a somewhat stupid virtue. It rather impugns a man's intelligence that he should be ignorant of his own merits, with which he has admirable opportunity to be well acquainted. So I will not accuse Perry of not knowing his own value; but he regarded it not in an egotistic way, but only as a simple basic fact, to be admitted and then not afterwards to be referred to. If there had ever been question of it the procession of favorable witnesses would have been impressive. A muster-roll of his intimate friends would resemble endorsements on a note which is too good to need such guarantors. But for other reasons the list is interesting. It was in boyhood that he began his friendship with the two brothers, Henry James, the novelist, and William James, the philosopher, and the alliance with both grew in strength in mature

years. Henry was two years his senior, but this gap became annually less and less material. Later in the strife which raged concerning the writings of that much-admired and also much-criticised author, he found no more stalwart champion than Perry — not that Perry himself was generally an addict to that school in literature which seeks by strange phraseology to indicate the unutterable; but generous fealty led him always stoutly to support the man whom he had liked and played with in his youth. He once admitted that his friend 'could not be read on the run' even by him; and this was as near as he ever came to a criticism. This loyalty was rewarded with warm affection on the part of the much-admired and much-belabored writer. An abundant correspondence bore witness to the relationship.

Only a little less close was the friendship between Perry and Professor William James. Some of his remarks about that wise man, who has certainly enjoyed more popularity than usually falls to the lot of those who deal with these abstruse topics, may be interesting. Thus, on September 14, 1910: 'As for William James's philosophy, it is the only one I could ever have any patience with, because he kicked downstairs and out of the house the whole bunch of long-winded, psalm-singing, self-praising philosophers.' And again, after sneering at those metaphysicians who think that 'long words and barbarous phraseology

are the key to the Universe — as if there were any key,' he goes on to say: 'William James looked at things without this pompous mouthing ceremony, and so I read and here and there understand bits of his books. Since no two men are exactly alike, no two men thoroughly agree about anything in philosophy, but they all fight like cats to establish their own theories, whereas other people let differences exist. They are as narrow-minded and bigoted as the old Inquisitors, as Pius X himself. If William James did no more than shake down the absurd scaffolding of verbiage on which metaphysicians browse, he deserves a world's gratitude. How much more he did I don't know. It is delightful to see how highly he was thought of in France. They didn't wait, to find him out, till he was dead.'

Howells was another close intimate. At one time when both were young and struggling in early authorship they engaged in a joint enterprise — the collection and writing of noted tales of thrilling adventures. Doubtless it was a little in the nature of a pot-boiler, and unfortunately it was not very effective in making the pot boil. But neither of them charged this miscarriage to the fault of the other, and in fact, as they took it with good-natured philosophy, it was rather an amusing link in the chain which held the two together. Whenever they were in the same city they came together almost daily, and at other times exchanged visits.

In September, 1903, Perry thus facetiously mentioned one of his many trips to stay with Howells at Kittery Point: 'I'm away, if you must know, *chez* W. D. H., who wishes to study a perfectly lovely character, without a flaw, for his novel. I have promised to sit for forty-eight hours and with such a chance he will probably outdo the heroes of the Biographical Dictionary.' It is not known that Howells properly seized this opportunity to present Perry in print, but it is known that he constantly sought Perry's suggestive criticism. It was a life-long alliance.

Another even closer friendship was that which held Perry and John Fiske in steadfast bonds of intimacy. For years Perry used to take his midday Sunday meal at Fiske's table, and many a night did they see late hours as they talked together. Each generously admired the talents of the other, and so enduring a connection was truly refreshing to look upon in this shifting world. In intercourse with Fiske it may be supposed that Perry courteously, perhaps prudently, refrained from airing that somewhat contemptuous opinion of history as a subject for study or a topic for authorship which he used to amuse himself by maintaining on less inappropriate occasions. At any rate, if he ever spoke his mind, Fiske had the magnanimity to overlook the eccentricity, and actually repaid the strictures with the compliment of dedicating to Perry one of his books upon the obnoxious subject;

— it is not to be suspected that there was a dash of humor in the act. When Fiske died, Perry was asked to write a memorial volume, for the 'Beacon Series.' Certainly his heart inspired this writing, for it was the best service which he could render to the friend whom he so greatly loved and admired. The toil which he put into it, unprecedented in his previous literary work, was very great. He was resolved to do his uttermost. As always happens in such cases, he became very despondent as to his success. In May, 1905, he wrote to me: 'My booklet, or libel, goes slowly. It is once more becoming evident that I can't write. I have long known it, and now every one will know it. I shall never again be asked to take human life.' In July following: 'Don't ask me about my John Fiske. If ghosts walk, he will haunt me till I, too, become one. He will creak on every floor, tap on every bed-board, perch on mine in just indignation — he, who when living was never angry. Why wasn't he saved from his friends? We will not speak of the accursed book. Selah!' And again in the same month: 'I hope you are right; that a book is better in print than in MS. If not, I'm a gone coon. At any rate . . . I now leave the field clear for you, for I have made a hideous mess of this my last flight, my swan song. I've forgotten who my haughty publishers are, but they are ruined! The "Beacon Biographies" goes out! They will beg their bread from door to door.'

Of course, all this despair was really the precursor of a great success. When the publishers received the manuscript, they were so pleased that they cried out for 'more'! They begged him to extend it, but this he resolutely declined to do. He had put it into as good shape as he possibly could and in that shape it must remain. 'The publishers,' he wrote me, 'must have more words. They can't get 'em from me. I have said all I can say and the rest is silence. It is absolutely as impossible for me to add bulk to my puny MS. as to add a cubit to my stature; and there you are! Remember, I am not obstinate; I am incompetent. I have gazed hopelessly at the MS. and shall send it back to them. If they don't want it, they can either send it to an enlarger or reject it.' Thus, and in other letters to a like purport, he spoke of a book which — though we may agree with the publishers and wish there were more of it — was really a gem, and was certainly, in a purely literary and artistic point of view, quite the best thing that Perry ever wrote.

Since for the moment we are dating back to early days, it is worth recording that when Perry's marriage took place, the young couple were invited to pass a week with the 'Sage of Concord' and they had the honor of being the guests of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Afterward the family friendship was long maintained.

Later on, that genial and hospitable gentleman,

James Ford Rhodes, was inducted into the inner circle, and he and Perry became greatly attached to each other. There were also the learned Dr. George F. Moore of Harvard and Raphael Pumpelly and Professor Phelps of Yale, to extend the list. This last-named gentleman wrote an excellent memorial notice about Perry in 'Scribner's Magazine.' Therein he said: 'He knew intimately most of the leading writers in America of the latter half of the nineteenth century; Howells and James and Lowell were like members of his family. Owing to his prolonged sojourns in Europe and his familiarity with the Continental languages, which he spoke fluently, he had any number of interesting anecdotes of Turgenieff, Daudet, De Maupassant, George Eliot, and others.' 'I have never known a man of greater intellectual curiosity, or of more uncompromising intellectual integrity; he could not be deceived by shoddy or superficial work, and was uninfluenced by any mere popular enthusiasm.'

Besides these, there was a less widely known, but not less agreeable circle of clever men, whose reputation was perhaps hardly national, but who formed a very agreeable coterie in Boston. Let me venture to add the name of one lady, the daughter of Rufus Choate, the famous Mrs. Bell, far and away the most distinguished woman who has ever added brilliancy to the literary circles of Boston.

Further, a conspicuous place among Perry's friends and correspondents was filled by his son-in-law, Joseph C. Grew. Perhaps the principals in that fortunate matrimonial alliance hardly reaped from it a higher satisfaction than it brought to him. He was greatly attached to Mr. Grew, highly admired his qualities and abilities, and watched his steadily advancing success with pride and delight, with a happy conviction also that his successive advancements were well deserved; and cherishing the cheerful assurance that in due time still more would be coming to pass. With what keen pleasure he would bring in 'a letter from Joe' and read it to me! The reading was in itself pleasant enough, but the sight of Tom's generous gratification was even pleasanter. This was really the great joy of his declining years.

I have spoken above of Henry James, and I yield to the temptation to be guilty of an interpolation which is so interesting that it will surely be pardoned. When that gentleman changed his American citizenship in order to become an English subject, he wrote to Mr. and Mrs. Perry the following letter:

2417 KENSINGTON 21, CARLYLE MANSIONS,
CHEYNE WALK, S.W.
September 7th, 1915

MY DEAR LILLA,

See how I have to answer you in order to answer you at all! Our troubled conditions, and my own

poor physical ones above all, leave me mostly no alternative to this. Your second good letter, with the Belgian verses, came in this morning. . . . I greatly applaud, by the way, your Verses, which are full of feeling, force and felicity — so full that they really relieve one after the sight, inevitably more or less frequent here, of lots of invocations of the Muse to which one can't feel that she has very eagerly responded. . . .

I think it quite natural you should regret my not having been able to stick to my American citizenship; you can't regret it more than I do; but that 'able' contains the whole essence of the matter. I hold that one should always so stick — save in the presence of facts (these mostly of the greatest rarity) that altogether transform the case. The immediate presence of the Enemy transforms it from head to foot, when one's own nationality does nothing for one that keeps pace with the transformation. To have lived in this intimacy of relation with the Allies, that is with England and France in particular, all these years, and yet still have nothing to say to them but that I *wouldn't* allow my participation in their case, my constant instinctive and intense 'we' and 'our,' to translate itself into the only terms that meant anything direct and close, represented for me just unrelieved anguish and indeed at last, frankly speaking, unrelieved ignominy. I speak but for myself and out of the depths of my own *relation.* The comfort of

having rectified that false position is, I find, unutterable — though Mr. Wilson could have rectified it long since, I mean could have relieved me, as I say, with one waggle of his little finger. With that waggle to hold on to, I should have left the matter quite lucidly alone. My ci-devant country, moreover, is not by any means, my dear Lilla, as 'proud of me' as *that* comes to! I assure you she isn't; I have received during these last years, in various odd straggling ways, superabundant testimony to her refusal to cultivate any such damnable vice! Of course that matter of her position on all these and like questions, her great doctrine that to invite scores and scores of millions of aliens to naturalise themselves with *her* is in the highest degree exemplary and edifying, while any such proceeding on the part of one of her own children elsewhere deserves but signal reprobation — of course that fine discrepancy is too obvious to waste words on! Let me assure you (for your verses help me to feel it) that if you yourself, at the end of long and intimate establishment here, had wanted to attest the attachment which the huge 'new fact,' the national exposure on such a scale as had never been dreamt of in the world before, would have laid unappeaseably on your soul, you would absolutely (after straining your eyes and ears across the sea, for a year, all in vain), have found no other way that met your case.

Very gruesome, I quite recognise, what you tell

me of the German ubiquity all over the place — as exemplified by your Boche schoolmaster at Hancock, etc. — and I really assent to the proposition that my own lips at least are now quite sealed by my having expressed myself once for all in that deliberate selective act. I won't say more about the whole portentous matter now, or about anything else; I soon come in letter-writing to the end of my tether now — and here I seem to have reached it. I think I lately wrote to Thomas and sent him something or other; at any rate I greet him faithfully now and include you together in my embrace. I have stuck to London altogether this summer as you see; moping alone in the country has become both physically and morally impossible to me, and I keep lending my house there to friends to whom, in our growing economic and other predicament, though this quite includes my own, it is a good deal of a help. We have had from the point of view of atmosphere and beauty the most ideally cool and yet benignant summer. You sound on the other hand more dank and dripping than I have ever known our — that is your! — gritty clime to show for. Natural tears, I suppose, at the defection of your all-faithfullest still old

HENRY JAMES

It is well remembered that this change of allegiance brought down at the time a storm of indignation on the part of Americans. We may now

wonder — Why? The query is not easy to answer save at the expense of our national consistency. Had we not eagerly welcomed Mr. Carl Schurz when he took citizenship in our country with which he had absolutely no relationship whatsoever; did we not soon load him with grateful honors? When Mr. James returned to the land of his father, why did we subject him to such contumelious abuse? Doubtless there may be some answer, yet one must be very clever to find it out.

Some names more or less celebrated in Boston and Cambridge during Perry's lifetime do not appear in the foregoing list, and their absence may be noticed. For the most part they might have appeared therein had he wished it; but he had not so elected. He was, in fact, a very independent man; those who liked him not might say, a very prejudiced man, and he would not have been disturbed by the word. It made no difference to him in what estimation any person might be held by others; he always formed his own judgment, and if he thought that the public admiration was erroneously based — as he pretty often did, for he was a critical judge — he always honestly stood aloof. Popular favor meant nothing to him. The 'little tin god on wheels' was no sort of a deity for him. It has — in times past, of course, be it well understood! — been much the fashion in Boston to establish a select private Valhalla of bright little divinities of that aforesaid shining metal and to

worship them in a very ostentatious manner. To be well recognized in the old-time cultivated city it was desirable to be either one of these gods, or, if this could not be compassed, then to be a conspicuous worshipper or herald of some one of them. Now Perry would be neither the one nor the other. He might have mounted an altar, himself; or he might have burned incense at some other altar; or he might have led a choral procession; but he had no such astute worldly prudence. If when the name of one of these popular idols was mentioned in good society any gentleman imprudently shrugged his shoulders, he was inevitably made to suffer for his independence. Perry was apt to make this gesture rather recklessly, regardless of consequences. For at least he never gave praise, hoping to receive as much again. There was no exchange of insincere courtesy; — indeed there could be none, for Perry was as genuine as sunshine. If he did not always say all that he thought, at least he never said what he did not think.

It has been said that in Europe Perry had a multitude of friends. The very learned Salomon Reinach of Paris, the leader among French scholars, perhaps should head the list of these. For long years he was Perry's intimate associate when Perry was abroad, and faithful correspondent when Perry was at home. Many were the 'good talks' which they had between them. After Perry's death Mr. Reinach wrote to Mrs. Perry:

16, Avenue Victor-Hugo
Boulogne-sur-Seine, *Aug.* 1/28

Dear Mrs. Perry:

Your kind letter was a great shock to me. I do not read the Paris 'Herald,' in which fashion and sport claim too much place for my taste, and, though knowing that my greatly valued friend was old, had no idea that he had left us, in the full possession of his splendid intelligence. I often quoted him as an example of the hellenised American, so completely different from the types we most often meet over here, and am afraid that, even in the higher ranks of your universities, such fine specimens of humanity and humanism must always remain exceptions, to be deeply regretted when they live only in our memories. He had a happy death, at the end, as it seems, of a happy life, and the letter in which you were good enough to relate his last days will be duly treasured by me. In fact, I have kept all your husband's letters and if the biographer wishes to read them, I can send them all, duly registered, to the address you would give me, as I sent Gertrude Bell's letters to her family for eventual publication. Of course, I would expect that they would be returned, as the enormous bulk of letters which I have classified is to go to a French library; but if I had the assurance — as I had in the case of Gertrude Bell — that M. Perry's letters to me would ultimately be preserved in an American library, I would send them as a definitive gift.

The series of his letters during the long period of the war may some day be interesting also for the history of public opinion in the States during the crisis. He was a faithful and enlightened friend of France and never fell a victim to the Bernstorff propaganda. He did not like President Wilson and repeatedly warned me that our hero-worship of him in France was a mistake; only quite recently, talking with our former ambassador Jusserand, who was Wilson's personal friend, I reminded him that very able Americans and most favourable to the allied cause, like your husband, had suspected Wilson of being a danger more than a help. What we have learned since of the President's quarrel with Lansing and House has gone far to confirm your husband's suspicions that he was not the right man in the greatest place ever occupied by an American.

May I hope seeing you once more in Europe?

Believe me, dear Madam, in deep sympathy, yours very devotedly

S. Reinach

On the first of Perry's trips abroad, with his family, great was their astonishment to find a letter from John Addington Symonds awaiting them at Southampton, begging them to pass three days with him at Oxford, so that he, having been a Fellow at the University, might have the pleasure of introducing them to places and people there whom

otherwise they might not see. Perry had corresponded with him without having ever personally met him, but Symonds, in some way hearing of his coming abroad, thus opened a personal friendship. From Fitzgerald also Perry received a friendly and unusual personal compliment. Before any one in this country, and when very few people in Europe, had awakened to that poet, Perry (who saw every printed thing) got hold of some of his work, appreciated it and was moved to write a couple of articles upon it — one in the 'Atlantic Monthly,' the other in the New York 'Nation.' These introduced Fitzgerald to readers in the United States, and thence his fame may be said to have spread retroactively back to his own country. The result was that he wrote to Perry a letter of warm personal thanks for having thus introduced him to American readers before he was known to his English fellow-countrymen. Later he sent to Perry many volumes of his works, privately printed with broad margins, containing his own marginal memoranda and notes.

Then there was von Schroeder, Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Vienna, one of the most learned scholars of his day. Perry writes: 'I see much of von Schroeder, who is one of the dearest of men, reminding me very much of John Fiske. He does not ride the bicycle, but we have many tastes in common.' Then, there was also the very delightful friendship which united Perry and

his wife with Monet, whose neighbor they were for many summers at Giverny. This was one of the valued friendships of Perry's life. Mrs. Perry was an enthusiastic devotee of the new school in art; and so pleased was Monet with her that, though he would never, after the usual fashion of French painters, take any pupils, he invited her to show her pictures to him, and gave her much valuable advice. Then, also, there was Berenson, the leading European critic and authority in matters in mediæval art. And there were his good friends Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gay, the former an artist of high repute in Paris. Besides such noted persons Perry and his wife had a large circle of acquaintance in society, and, in a word, led as agreeable a life in foreign parts as can well be pictured. Is it strange that they enjoyed it?

The foregoing pages have given occasion for the mention of many of his friends, but as I look them over a throng of others who should be named occurs to my memory — though in the most careful list it is inevitable that some should be vexatiously forgotten. John La Farge, who married Perry's older sister, was a very brilliant man, nearly, perhaps fully, a real genius, and he exerted no small influence upon his youthful brother-in-law. During his earlier years another friend was Bellamy Storer, a very able man, as his later career showed. Another was the Reverend Hercules Warren Fay, less

well known, but a man of great intellectual ability. In the earlier years, too, there was John Dennett, who died prematurely; during his brief life he wrote for the 'Nation' and was considered among his contemporaries to be of greater promise than any other one among them. John C. Ropes and Professor John C. Gray, co-partners in the law, gentlemen of the highest reputation both in law and literature, were also among his intimates. Pupils of his at Harvard, with whom he maintained intimate relations, were Richard Welling, L. E. Opdycke, and George Pellew, the last-named of whom dedicated to him one of his books. Through Thomas B. Meteyard and his wife, lifelong friends of the Perrys, he was brought into friendly relationship with the poets, Bliss Carman and Richard Hovey. Further, especially there should be mentioned the distinguished poet, Edward Arlington Robinson. The poems of this writer, when they were first brought out, before the public had learned to appreciate them, had been bought and read by Perry with eager admiration. Some years later, Chalmers Clifton, a young musician and conductor, brought Mr. Robinson himself, from the 'Peterborough Colony,' to call upon the Perrys at Hancock. A lifelong intimacy resulted, and Mr. Robinson dedicated one of his volumes to them. Another very close friend of the family is James McLane, of Harvard University, a young man, a poet, and of high promise for the future. Among painters there

were also Theodore Robinson and our distinguished Tarbell; many more likewise in France, Pissaro, Howard Cushing, and others. Miss Irwin, Dean of Radcliffe, was his cousin and his good friend from his earliest boyhood. Then at the Public Library also was his associate Miss Macurdy, for whose abilities in filling her position he had great respect. . . . But why seek to continue the list? However long I may make it, I shall still clumsily leave unthought of many names which should be mentioned.

Although of social tastes, Perry was by no means addicted to club life. Perhaps it was for the very reason that he had such a multitude of individual friends that he felt no need of such associations. What chiefly pleased him was the more familiar chat with the chosen comrade. There was, however, one Dinner Club to which he belonged — it had no name; we called it simply The Club — and without mention of it a Memoir of him would be indeed imperfect. If I should say that his attachment to it was really sentimental I should hardly use an extravagant expression — and The Club returned his feeling. His presence was certainly more valued than that of any other individual member (I say this *pace* all the others, who will unanimously agree to it, I am sure). Once, when he was sailing for foreign parts The Club paid him the unique compliment of making him the present of a book to alleviate the tedium of the voyage. I cannot recall

the exact date at which THE CLUB was organized, but I think it must have been little, if at all, short of sixty years ago. A dozen, or thereabouts, clever, ambitious young fellows came together to dine in company once a month, cheaply and gaily, at one available hostelry or another. Good fellowship and good talk were expected to take the place of fine dishes and costly wines — and they did so, to universal satisfaction. Later on, it is true, with advancing prosperity, good dinners succeeded to the primitive simplicity; but the character of THE CLUB never changed. How often, and from how many members, have I heard the hearty allegation: 'The best club I ever belonged to!' We did not seek to perpetuate it. It exists no longer, and Perry was at the last regular dinner. Pardon me if I interpolate a list of those who, in over half a century, have belonged to it: the catalogue is not out of place in Perry's Memoir:

Henry Adams
Alexander Agassiz
Thomas B. Aldrich
William Sturgis Bigelow
Earl of Camperdown
Thomas B. Curtis
Harvey Cushing
J. R. Dennett
John Fiske
John C. Gray
Charles E. Grinnell
Charles Hale
Henry L. Higginson
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.
John Homans
Edward S. Hooper
William D. Howells
Henry James
William James
George F. Moore
John T. Morse, Jr.
Baron Osten-Sacken
Francis Parkman
Charles E. Perkins
William E. Perkins
Bliss Perry

Thomas S. Perry
H. S. Pritchett
Raphael Pumpelly
Henry H. Richardson
James Ford Rhodes
John C. Ropes
Theodore W. Richards
Arthur G. Sedgwick
Moorfield Storey
Henry P. Walcott
Wendell Phillips Walley
John C. Warren
Charles A. Whittier

CHAPTER IV

EUROPE

While matters stood thus the Perry family decided upon a trip abroad. It was the first of many; the full list being as follows:

1. June, 1887, to November, 1889.
2. April, 1891, to October, 1891.
3. April, 1894, to July, 1897.
4. October, 1905, to November, 1909.

Obviously Europe played a much larger part in Perry's life than it does in the lives of most of us. He did not make the fashionable 'run to the other side,' to live in hotels and see 'the sights.' No such thing for him! He made long stays, and he lived there as one lives at home. He was always happy there. Yet, as I say so, the remembrance occurs to me of two letters which I found in a bundle of those sent to his friend Opdycke. These were written in 1888, as follows:

January, 1888: 'Paris is a great city of about 2,000,000 inhabitants; their habits are low, indeed indescribable. What is worse, their theatres are not very good. *L'abbé Constantin* is beneath contempt, as people say, though I never have seen anything quite so bad as that; and nears its 100th night.

La Souris is stuff; and *La Tosca* not much better.' In June of the same year, again: 'I quite agree with you about the deadness of Paris air. It is the only place I know where breathing results in a violent effort, and the only one where I ever feel tired. We shall all be glad to change.'

More astonishing, more inexplicable words never were penned. If upon the face of the globe there was a spot where Perry was supremely happy, that place, next to Giverny, was Paris. Ten years later he wrote to his friend, Mrs. Walter Gay: 'I can assure you that when we talk about the place where we should like to be, it is to Paris that our hearts turn. It is really in my opinion the only place worth living in.' Beyond doubt these lines accurately represent Perry's permanent state of mind. The foregoing earlier outbursts are as bewildering as if some one should turn up with a letter from Sir Walter Scott roundly berating Scotland. Paris was, as the phrase goes, his Mecca. We have seen that he had already lived for a long while in Germany and at an age when one usually enjoys life; but he had liked neither the country nor the people. Later, as a traveller he had on several trips found great pleasure in Italy; and in two journeys through Spain he had keen enjoyment, always delighting to talk about them. Of England perhaps he knew less, and I should have inclined to say that he was not much attracted by the country. But his wife, who is a far better au-

thority, assures me that I am entirely mistaken. I admit that undoubtedly he greatly admired English literature and English characteristics. But he did not seek to frequent that island as he did the Continent. I have found two letters written by him from there, and will submit them herewith, in evidence:

THE ATHENÆUM
PALL MALL, S.W.
LONDON, *Nov.* 15, '06

DEAR JOHN:

I beg of you to notice the image and superscription enstamped upon this paper, for I am writing within the sacred precincts of the Athenæum Club. Your first question will of course be, how the devil did he break in? Is it as a member of the St. Botolph that he goes *ad eundem*, so to speak, into the St. B. of London? Not at all; if you will look into your Baedeker, you will see that admission is an honour conferred only on distinguished visitors, so pay great attention to what I choose to divulge, for it's all you'll ever know about reputable club life in London. Yes, reputable and almost sacred, for these vast halls swarm with bishops who are gathered together in this place to wage a holy war against the present government. In fact, it's such a very reputable place that I feel lonely and yearn to run in to your genial house, your small house, your closet of a library, for I have been sitting all afternoon with lords, dukes and earls and bishops

and deans and things, in a library composed of three vast sections, two of them 24 by 24 and the middle one 36 by 24. The smoking room in which I thus violate the sacred laws of hospitality is at least 50 by 24. I shall move into the Public Library or buy it (on a mortgage) for our Club. But I'm not proud, no, I am pleased but not proud at this tardy recognition of a few of my virtues. I am, however, writing a great many letters on Club paper. I left Giverny Monday last and crossed *via* Dieppe and New Haven, 3½ hours of salt water. Saturday I go to Rye to pay a visit to Harry James. Meanwhile I am busy with my tailor, ordering clothes which will make T—— green with envy (a frock coat with tails like a hoopskirt, etc., etc.), and seeing many pictures. The family left Giverny when I did, to go to 9, Avenue de La Bourdonnais, our address for the winter.

Saturday before we left Mrs. Gardner came down, not so much, I fear, for *nos beaux yeux* as for those of Monet whom we took her to see. She was very pleasant and we did not talk about the Boston Art Museum. The pictures here are superb and I had a comparatively bright morning with the Wallace collection this morning. You would also greatly enjoy the National Portrait Gallery with portraits (of various degrees of merit) of every Englishman you ever heard of. I have also been taken into the penetralia of the British Museum. However, I will not boast any more. I will rather

thank you for your last letter which I so insufficiently answered.

Yours

T. S. Perry

The Athenæum
Pall Mall, S.W.
Nov. 15, 1906

P.S.

Dear John.

I will now write a postscript to the letter I posted just before dinner, and what a dinner! One can fill himself with literary memories here, but as for food, fie upon it! The only thing the English can do in the kitchen is to boil a potato. That they do to perfection. One hears of their roasts, but I have had bad luck with them. Their ideal of cooking seems to be to boil napkins and to serve them lukewarm.

I am back in the 5 acre room smoking. One of those damned bishops has just come in and is also smoking and reading a profane book. He looks like an Irishman and I was almost tempted to speak to him, but I was afraid he would excommunicate me on the spot, so I begin to talk to you instead. He will never know how much good talk he is missing.

Do you know, London, England I mean, seems to me a most foreign country. I feel as strange here as a Frenchman. At dinner, overcome with home-

sickness, I read Briand's speech of a day or two ago and admired it much. I was never so far away from France. No one here has any idea of what is going on there. The dinner proved it, and I am thinking of promulgating a theory according to which literary differences really depend on the food differences. You see I am just in that state of ignorance which leads the stranger in a country to write a book about it.

Since dinner (while smoking, of course, — what's the room built for?) I have been reading (and the coffee *was* good, much better than we can get in France) Herbert Paul's 'Stray Leaves,' and I beg of you, if you don't know it, to get it. He is really amusing, not equally so at all times, but very good. Don't pain me by rejecting my advice. If I don't send you the 'Punch' of the 14th *inst.*, get for yourself that number and read an amusing paragraph about this Club. Wms. has it. To go back to H. Paul, he shows what the modern chatty essayist can do.

I am writing with a quill pen; that is what is provided here — there are one or two steel pens too, but I can't abide them, and to take from my pocket my own gold pen would set me down as a Rockefeller. — Here's another Bishop! No, I'm wrong, he has on trousers, the Bishop is in knickerbockers, but he's a big bug anyway. He too is going to write at the next desk.

I can think of no more frivolity. I have prattled

enough. The shades of Macaulay, Trollope, Theodore Hook, Thackerary, arise and warn me to be serious. So I stop. — By the living Jingo, here is *another* Bishop, a real one this time, who came and fluttered about me. I thought he must have seen what I had written and wanted to pray for me, but he was looking for a pencil he had left here; at least so he says. I haven't seen it.

Farewell. Greetings.

Yours

T. S. Perry

Even in Turkey, though he never went there, he took an interest, and wrote: 'I see with satisfaction (in "Transcript") that the French and English are come together on the Eastern question. It was time. The Turk shows very clearly how untrue is the statement, made principally by bankers, that all wars depend on them, the bankers; i.e., the Turks have no money, they never pay their debts, and now they would find it harder than ever to raise a loan. *But* they go ahead and fight just as if they were properly financed. The men are as eager as if they were having high wages and were sure of a *bonus* and subsequent pension like those of the U.S.A. That is the advantage that despotism has over democracy.'

Undeniably it was always to France that his longings turned; and in that country the spot espe-

cially dear to him was the village of Giverny, in Normandy. This was the home of Claude Monet, and was the resort of many painters. The Perry family had a cottage there, where they habitually passed their summers in the congenial society of the neighborhood and of course became much attached to it. To his own country he strove hard to be loyal, but in real underlying truth the routine of daily life in the United States did not accord with his standards or requirements. Congenial friends he had there in abundance and there was a sort of treasure-house in the Public Library of Boston, a spot of which he spoke with real sentiment. But the bustle and whirl of a community devoted to affairs was not music in his ears. Scholarship was too sparse in the land; what there was of it seemed like an imported article, and the saddest thing was that it seemed actually upon the decrease.

Quite differently in Paris and at Giverny he had the *entrée* of the *ateliers* of the painters of the school which was then new, and he was on terms of personal friendship with several of them, brought about through his wife's distinction as an artist. There were the old book-stalls on the Quai. There was very agreeable general society. Especially there was his friend Salomon Reinach, perhaps the most distinguished among the learned men of Europe. He met also, more or less, nearly all the writers who were then making French literature

so fascinating. If he grew restless, he could run to other places, make a bicycle tour in Italy, or in the Low Countries, or in Spain. One year he went to Austria, also to St. Petersburg, and Moscow, and even to Finland. Fortunately his family enjoyed these pleasures as much as he did. As for art, his wife really knew thoroughly the things which he enjoyed intelligently and liked to talk about; and in society she was not less warmly welcomed than he was. In the many tours which they took infinite pleasure in making on the bicycle, she could push him hard. In a word, it was one of those cases where the whole situation was of that pleasant kind where both parties thoroughly enjoy the same thing — a charming *camaraderie*. The young ones were picking up education in music, were speaking languages, and amusing and educating themselves generally. So altogether the family group was more than merely contented in foreign parts. Wherever they went they always made friends and enjoyed agreeable social reception. Few families have travelled so happily.

In other ways also Perry had the happy faculty of becoming immersed in his surroundings. His passion for following public affairs included France almost as much as his own country, and he knew nearly as much concerning her statesmen as he did concerning our own. During long years, indeed to the time of his death, at home and abroad, he always subscribed to 'Le Temps,' a sheet for which

he frequently expressed the highest admiration, and he habitually read other Parisian papers. His partisanship was less eager, but his interest was hardly less vehement than if the affairs had been those of his own land. He once said, 'I have been studying French politics for ten years,' and after the ten years had elapsed he continued the study. It is not desirable to plunge into this domain here — in fact I feel myself quite incompetent to do so. But at least the dramatic episode of 'L'Affaire' — the Dreyfus matter — demands attention. In this Perry became as deeply interested as were the Frenchmen. He wrote:

December 27, 1898: 'As you know, the Dreyfus affair interests me more than anything in the world, and everything I can hear or see that throws any light upon it interests me beyond measure. . . . The feeling against him must rest on the knowledge that there has been a crime that, discovered, would bring down the Republic. I will then violently keep silence.'

The ultimate development of the case showed the correctness of the statement. Later he wrote to his friend, Mrs. Walter Gay, in Paris:

October 25, 1899: 'I think that the dignity of the French Dreyfusards in the face of the insulting and abominable verdict is most impressive. It has made men of some of them just as it has exposed Brunetière, Lemaître and Barrès. A. France, for example, has been lifted by it; it has redeemed Zola;

and I find even Gaston Deschamps (of "Temps") more serious than before. Bourget remains as fundamentally insignificant as ever; he will end by writing manuals of millinery. Struggle as they will against it, it has been proved that Paris is a part of the Universe, subject to moral laws, not the silly Capua they try to make it.'

Ultimately, at the astonishing close, he triumphantly wrote:

Giverny, July 22, 1906: 'The most marvellous thing that ever happened was giving Dreyfus the Cross of the Legion of Honour yesterday in the place where he had been degraded in January, 1895. There was something very dramatic — wasn't there? — in that rectification. I well remember waking early that January 5 [the day of the degradation], and wondering whether I should not go; but I didn't; it would be too agonizing. The whole affair has interested me more than anything I can remember and I am glad to have lived to see this conclusion. It is agreeable, for a change, to see justice done.'

More interesting even than the correctness of Perry's opinion in this matter from its earliest stage had been the intensity of interest which he showed therein throughout all its varying fortunes. It was eminently characteristic of his strength of conviction; his beliefs were always complete and thorough; wavering and indecision never left him in uncertainty.

Further it may be said that there were good reasons why Perry fancied Europe, at least continental Europe, so highly in comparison with his native land as a place of residence. The explanatory truth was, that he was in reality a genuine 'scholar.' As such he was an exotic, very solitary in the United States. There were few scholars scattered over that vast country. Even the few persons who respected scholarship felt — or would have felt, had they known enough — a trifle ill at ease when in presence of the genuine article. At home he was lonely; in Europe it was widely different. There his acquirements were recognized and honored; he was one of a group scattered through European capitals, especially in Paris, also in Vienna, who welcomed him as one of their guild. Many among them were his personal friends. In a word, he had a place, a standing, and a circle in Europe which he could not find in his own country. At home his good friend, George F. Moore, of Harvard College, was perhaps the only man with whom he could have such communion as he craved. Add this to the libraries and the picture-galleries of Europe, and we see the magnets which drew Perry ever thither. It was a situation which certainly left him open to no criticism.

After all, it may have been only a case of heredity! The suggestion is a bit interesting. Perry was no more addicted to Paris than his distinguished ancestor had been. Benjamin Franklin was no

exile during his long residence in that attractive capital, but very decidedly quite the contrary. Few persons have enjoyed it more than he did, but it never quite displaced his native land; and the same was the case with his descendant.

Perry never, either in fact or by affectation, became *depaysé*, nor was ever disloyal to the United States. This was not at all his attitude; but rather it was: this shalt thou love, but shalt not leave the other unloved. It was only the case that those things which happened chiefly to attract him were to be found in best form and greatest abundance abroad. One naturally enters the shop where he can find the best selection of the articles that he wants.

Perry's travels, extending beyond the usual routes, took him into Russia. He had been among the earliest American discoverers of the new Russian literature, when it was first beginning to draw attention in France; and when, as has been said, he published in Boston translations of some of Turgenieff's novels. Thereupon the author himself had written a very grateful letter to the gentleman who was thus introducing him to a new continent. This interest, continuing to wax steadily greater in Perry's mind, becoming in fact an enthusiasm, finally induced him to undertake to master the Russian language. It was no trifling enterprise, especially for a man seventy years of

age, and he said later that the language was 'a million times' more difficult than any other which he had ever undertaken, and he did not exclude Sanskrit! Professor Phelps well remarks that 'it was a more difficult task than Cato's learning Greek after eighty.' But he persevered stubbornly and survived to make himself a thorough master of a tongue which the outside world fancies to be still semi-barbaric. Ultimately he read it with perfect ease and the whole great, strange field of Russian literature lay open before him. He was enchanted; he roamed through it with delight. Turgenieff, Andreiev, Checkhoff, and especially Dostoievsky, held him enthralled. It is to be lamented that he did not undertake the task of making further good translations; but he did not, nor ever even wrote any stimulating articles on the subject. If this seems strange, as well as unfortunate, it can only be said that it was quite characteristic of him. Possibly he was no longer over-fond of work; but certainly he had not the slightest desire to attract notice, even to secure praise, for himself. As usual, his purpose was to obtain knowledge rather than to spread it abroad. So after he had had the gratification of familiarizing himself with all this wonderful new field in literature, he rested satisfied. He had no zeal to preach the gospel of Russian literature; let people find it out for themselves as they might. For himself, he had accomplished his end, and no ambition tempted

him further. But one or two letters which he wrote may entertain the reader:

September 7, 1921: 'I am reading a play of Tolstoi's in which he has out the question that embittered the last years of his married life; for the old man invented a new religion (just as if he lived in California!) and insisted on leading a life in conformity with his Christian ideals. Thus, if a peasant wanted some wood he was free to come in and chop down one of your trees and go off with the wood. This rather bothered his wife, who found strangers on the place cutting right and left. One of his daughters came to see L. [Mrs. Perry] in Paris and told her how cranky the old man was and what a nuisance. He has dramatized the whole situation with extraordinary vividness and with great fairness. The family discord is put well in sight. There are people who don't think it nice for a writer to retail his domestic woes to the public, but Tolstoi is not one of them. The fact is the notion of a *gentleman* is in many ways an artificial one, and it is not prevalent in Russia. The many novels I have read abound in little things that indicate a freedom from that way of looking at things. In this country, too, one observes an absence of many useful conventions that are bound to disappear from the whole world — fortunately they won't take all the virtues with them. . . . I now remember Princess Obelensky, [daughter of Tolstoi] said that the peasants promised that when the revolution should

come they would not destroy the Tolstoi estate — not they! *they* were above such crimes, but they would get some peasants from neighboring villages to do it! The fact is, Russian literature has been paving the way to this revolution by urging, *inter alia*, dividing the land. Beyond that they never looked; give the peasant land, was the cry, and no one questioned further except occasionally some ridiculous old conservative. Tolstoi did his share in shaking things up.'

It may be inferred from the foregoing that admiration of Russian literature by no means led to admiration of Russians. Witness also this passage: 'If anything is curious where the oddest things are the commonest, it must be the sight of the world running like a herd of sheep to follow the lessons and example of the Russians. Who are the Russians? Simply a semi-barbarous race — half Asiatic, ignorant beyond belief, wholly without experience in government, with no experience in the control of themselves or others, no political experience whatsoever. Really political and other experience seems to have no effect on the rest of the world if it lets them admire the Russians. Still, if they want to go to hell, they have engaged the best guides.'

In 1911: 'As for Stolypin, I thought the 'Post's' news article very good. The main trouble seems to be that he was expected to be a sort of combination of A. Lincoln and the late Gamaliel Bradford,

whereas he was a true Russian. When we think what he did, it must be confessed that it was admirable in amount and merit. He is blamed for indiscriminate hanging. I fancy few innocent men were hanged; but you can't expect to find a lily-livered sentimentalist among Russian statesmen, who shall turn pale at the sight of blood. The country has no experience of anything but force; you can't expect a leader to turn up with a strong feeling for single tax, free trade, abolition of hanging, woman suffrage, rubber heels, sleeping outdoors, and prison reform, all at once. They are a set of ruffians and act like ruffians. It is foolish to expect anything else. Stolypin was no New England selectman, though it seems to surprise us that he was not. The Liberals seem surprised that they are not allowed to do all the killing. No, Stolypin is to be judged only in relation to his time and country. From that soil now you mustn't expect gentle shepherds to grow. The Russians ought to be grateful for what he gave them. As for reasons for blaming him there are many.'

CHAPTER V

JAPAN

In 1897 an invitation came to Perry to fill the position of Professor of English Literature in a Japanese university. He accepted it, and in April, 1898, sailed for Japan. His wife and daughters followed a little later. Shortly after his arrival in Tokyo, he was given a very grand reception in the best Japanese style; there was a welcoming garden party with all sorts of shows, among others a sword dance and fireworks, and of course also an address. This was made by a nobleman, the Marquis Ito. This same dignitary, it is amusing to know, told Perry that he had assisted in stone-throwing at Commodore Perry; — but that, of course, must have occurred in his irresponsible boyhood. He remained a good friend of our Mr. Perry throughout his stay. In the course of his oration he courteously said that the name of Perry was 'a precious key that flew open the secret seal which has so long kept Japan in an impenetrable hermitage.' Later Perry was duly inducted into his duties which do not seem to have been immoderately exacting of time and effort. The name of the university was Keiogijiku, and doubtless the new incumbent was duly trained to pronounce it. His class numbered very few members for the reason that only those who already had

a fair command of the English language were admitted: it was really a class in 'advanced English'; and by what he has reported of them they were sufficiently apt and earnest. He had previously been invited to fill the like post in the University of Japan. Why he had declined that invitation and accepted this one was because the earlier one had involved a fixed engagement for five years to which he was unwilling to pledge himself in advance.

And now I confess myself perplexed as to how I am to continue this chapter. How did Perry like Japan? How did he enjoy his stay there? How did he feel towards the place and the people? On the one hand, it might be that the novel scene and much more the manners and ways of thought of a strange people would stimulate the liveliest interest. Or it might be that the absence of all the things which he cared for — libraries, books, paintings — would be too depressing. Which was to be the case? I hardly know. Mrs. Perry says that he enjoyed himself greatly. On the other hand, his letters persistently indicate a quite opposite condition of feeling. Be it admitted that the evidence given by his wife ought to be accepted as the more conclusive, yet the letters can hardly be altogether set aside. There is a possible suggestion for partially reconciling the two. He might have had scant interest and no liking aroused by the land and its inhabitants, and yet by the aid of

other resources he may have managed to make many of his days pass quite pleasantly. I incline to this explanation. His wife showed an aptitude, which he certainly did not, for adapting herself to the surroundings; she got better in touch with the strange people and she found admirable subjects for her ever busy brush. In a word, her lively and sympathetic nature put her *en rapport* with her surroundings to a degree which he could not emulate. Being cheerfully disposed herself, she possibly attributed to him more cheer than he felt.

But without pursuing too far this effort to reconcile discrepant evidence and to establish exactly the point on the thermometer to which his liking rose, it is safe to say that both he and his family found much to make life agreeable. The ardent reception which was given him was but the forecast of much more hospitality. The Japanese strove hard to do him honor; they treated him with much distinction, and if the banquets to which they invited him were not, gastronomically, all that he would have desired, and socially rather bored him, at least they were gratifying compliments. Then, too, for the resident foreign colony, the diplomatists especially, the advent of the Perry family was most welcome. Soon after their arrival Mrs. Perry gave a musicale, which she tells me was the first entertainment of the kind which had ever occurred in Tokyo. The members of the European legations thereafter formed the nucleus

of their social circle. They became a valuable element in the group. Visits and dinners were constantly interchanged, and the variety of new and cultivated people, bringing always varied and most interesting topics of serious talk and lively chat, of course must make the days pass agreeably. Perry, personally, succeeded in getting an abundance of the great sport of his life. He was an ardent lover of tennis, which he played with great skill; in France he had even defeated professionals. Now, in Japan, he got it in abundance. Especially the English Minister, Sir Ernest Satow, was almost as much an addict as Tom himself; he was not quite so good a player, but enough so to make their frequent contests very interesting. Where there was plenty of this game to the fore, Perry was sure to find life at least endurable. Thus in a scene which he did not like he found people whom he did like, and very probably was really much more contented than he declared himself to be. Sometimes he said so, as in this letter of December 27, 1898: 'Sir Ernest Satow, the British Minister, is a delightful man, full of learning and charm. He was here yesterday afternoon, and there came also the Guiberts. Guibert is Japanese Secretary of the French Legation, and is crammed full of learning, which extends from the Sanskrit Epics to the latest vaudeville. We see a good deal of him and of his wife.'

Again, November 29, 1900: Speaking of 'the

Isvolskys' he said to Mrs. Gay: 'They are very charming people and he is one of the ablest men in the Russian service. He was spoken of as the successor of Mouravieff. His wife is very clever. They dined with us the other evening.' Later this gentleman became the prime minister of Russia.

There seems to have been another man in Japan who was not without charm. Perry wrote me from Tokyo concerning Lieutenant-Colonel Churchill, of the Twelfth Lancers, military attaché at the British Legation: 'He is the only man living whom my wife and I agree in thinking beautiful. Generally we differ most seriously on this point. I mention, at some rare interval, an object capable (it seems to me) of receiving all adoration, but she expresses indifference if not contempt. Asked to name some one really deserving of admiration, she mentions some one who deserves stoning in the street, whom dogs would repeatedly growl at. But at last after years of discord we are of one mind about this man.'

Besides these gentlemen, the German minister, and the Austrian chargé d'affaires, seem to have been his more especial intimates, and real friendships grew up with some of them. Many were the dinners, the garden parties, the musicales, etc., which the group interchanged. Naturally also travellers, often very agreeable, and of more or less note, were constantly turning up. So he really must have had abundance of the interesting social life

which he always so highly relished. Books may have been scarce, and paintings, save those of his wife's creation, may have been non-existent; and Japanese entertainments may have been more quaint than socially attractive; but he had a good deal else to enjoy.

His official duties were not too onerous. Yet the situation was not quite so bad as it had been when he tried to teach Sanskrit at Harvard. He reports no great eagerness on the part of the young Japanese toward studying English literature. In 1900 he wrote: 'It's really a farce to keep me here. I have only four pupils. The rest do not care for the study of anything but political economy. The handful I have are interested: but to the rest English literature is as remote a subject as the Assyrian is to us.' And again soon afterward: 'My regular work for the rest of the year has become so light that it is practically nothing.' It was not, however, a part of his contract to provide pupils. This was the business of the governors of the university, and if they made his task easy by neglecting their own it was no fault of his. Yet apparently they themselves were surprised and discouraged, for I understand that they made no arrangements for continuing the course after his departure.

So life wagged along, with summers passed in the hill country, which Perry admitted was very beautiful; indeed he occasionally waxed enthusiastic about the scenery, which was an unusual

frame of mind for him. He had once said to me, 'The way to enjoy scenery is by reading a book.' But probably this outburst escaped on a 'black day,' when he was not feeling quite so well as usual. Another day when he was feeling more amiable he said: 'When a day is beautiful here it is most wonderfully beautiful, with effects of mist and sunlight that are most bewitching.'

At last the time drew on so that home really loomed in the distance; and as travellers on the ocean begin eagerly to talk about land and to look for it long before it is in sight, so he began to anticipate the return.

Tokyo, March 7, 1900: 'By the time this letter reaches you, I shall be beginning to work off my last year. But . . . when I get home I shall not have so good a cook; I shall not have so many servants. Here I live like persons in the New Testament — I regret to say that I refer principally to those gentlemen who seem to have been under a cloud when that very popular book was written — I clap my hands and cringing people appear, or don't appear, just as it happens. But more important are many things we don't get hold of, or a sight of, here: *books* and *pictures*.'

And again: February 20, 1901, he begins to talk with increasing anticipation of the approaching return to Boston. 'The time of our departure draws on. Already I am cautious in buying ink; I have got just cigars eno' to carry me to Boston; I

am uncertain whether my tobacco will carry me to Montreal. I fear not. You say: I rejoice in the prospect of getting back to Boston. Hardly. We shall all be glad eno' to leave, but I don't yearn for Boston. We expect to stay there a little while, and then to cut away for Europe. That is what we all want to do.... There are a few people whom I want to see — perhaps you can guess some — and many more whom I don't want to see. I yearn to set foot in the Public Library, but I expect to end my days in some village in France — Giverny or thereabouts — and, probably, gently gardening in the intervals of reading French papers and books. The winters we will pass in Paris and Italy.... One thing, don't get sad with life. It's depressing, but take it for granted that it is depressing and a fraud; and it is strange how much delight one gets from constantly seeing one's theories borne out by facts. It's the greatest consolation in the world, beyond money and beyond price.'

In this tone Perry sometimes talked; I should perhaps say that he sometimes amused himself by talking. For he was really a kindly, warm-hearted, cheerful, pleasure-loving man, and only entertained himself sportively with misanthropy. Yet like all men of a sensitive temperament he had 'blue' hours, and it must have been in one of these that the foregoing passage was written.

On May 20, 1901, he wrote, from Kamakura, where he had been 'arranging for his passage

home': 'This I thought that I had put in due order before I left Tokyo; but no sooner was my back turned than the N.Y.K. [the steamer company] took off the large, new, bilge-keeled steamer in which I had engaged rooms on the top deck, and put on the tubbiest of their tubs in her place. I was in despair. Now I have engaged passage, in a tub, to be sure, but a larger tub than the Ryona(?) Maru, which sails July 10, so that about August 2 or 3, I arrive in Boston. . . . The plan as I made it was capital, a good ship and a saving of millions. I still save the millions, but have a tub. Still you and I have sailed in meaner barks; so have Columbus and Magellan. . . . Hence I look forward to but seven weeks more of Japan. I lose the little taste of Kamakura . . . and, as I may have told you, I love tennis which prevails here. But on the other hand I escape the consecration of a Perry monument on the fourteenth, the Sunday after I sail, and though I love tennis much, I hate ceremonies more.'

The transit was duly made, and Perry landed in Seattle and crossed our continent by the Great Northern route, greatly impressed by the grandeur of the scenery through which his route lay.

Doubtless the reader will be vexed by so brief, dry, and unpicturesque a sketch of a three-year residence in the strange land. But — *que faire?* There is no material for anything more picturesque or more instructive or more interesting — I may

add more amusing. It may be shrewdly and no doubt justly suspected that the ladies of the household could have furnished much better material. They got a great deal more out of their surroundings then the less sympathetic male nature succeeded in doing. They even became fairly familiar with the perplexing language, while their lord and master showed little zeal for acquiring a companion for his Sanskrit. Also, Mrs. Perry was untiringly busy with her brush. Perry writes (November 29, 1900): 'My wife is hard at work with her painting. She has just finished a portrait of a Shinto priest, who has charge of the fire-walking. He is a curious soul. He made us a call a few days ago and he looked at all the pictures of Japan with great interest. His wife, a head priestess, is now sitting in her most gorgeous robes and with her hair dressed in the most complicated way, for her portrait; and yesterday at the end of the sitting the priest rewarded the toiling artist by performing a miracle. This time it was thunder that crashed and roared about them. He also accomplishes faith cures and has a number of patients.'

In writing the foregoing chapter, I admit that I have been not a little puzzled, and am doubtful as to how correctly I have presented the scene and set forth Perry's feelings. Not improbably he himself might have been embarrassed by a demand for an accurate estimate of his appreciation of the land and the people. Certainly he did not feel that en-

thusiasm which has been expressed by other visitors — for example, by our famous Professor Morse, or by Perry's good friend, Dr. Sturgis Bigelow. On the other hand, it may well be that his somewhat trenchant local criticisms applied only to the city of Tokyo, which he certainly did not admire, for when he went for his vacations into the mountainous parts, he was enchanted with the scenery. Also it is certain that in a more personal point of view the courtesy and flattering attentions shown him stirred a lively sense of gratitude. He had many good friends among the Japanese, of whom he spoke warmly, albeit sometimes amusingly. He signalized his return by drafting this advertisement:

A Gentleman
Of undoubted conversational ability, returning from Japan and Korea with a copious supply of amusing anecdotes and sound views on Far Eastern questions, is open to
Invitations
for the latter half of August and for the month of September. Renditions of Japanese songs a specialty. Seaside preferred.
Refers to J. T. M. . . ., Esq., Jr.
Address, etc.
Twice a week t. f.

But, as I look over the foregoing pages, I feel that really the best, indeed the only, way to draw a picture of Perry's life in Japan is to print his lively and humorous letters. Therefore, let me transcribe some of them in full.

CHAPTER VI

LETTERS FROM JAPAN

35, Mita Daimachi, Sanchome
Shiba, Tokyo, *June* 5, 1898

I wish I could write you the letter I want to write, but it is simply impossible, that's all. I can't do it. What this country is to me, I can't begin to tell you. Never in my life have I had such an experience of rapturous surprise. I had read all the books, but I simply didn't believe them any more than you believe the Good Book, or me in my more serious moments; yet every word they said was true, so far as they went. By the side of Japan, Italy, even Spain (our beloved Spain) is like East Cambridge or East Boston! . . .

Yes, I have been to Japan. Some people go to Heaven; I have always hoped to go there myself, but now I've seen that though I shall run up the Great Golden Staircase, three steps at a time, humming some familiar air — I shall at least have tact enough to choose a hymn tune — and that when Peter asks who I am and what I have done, I shall turn to gaze at the decorations while he overhauls his well-thumbed account book. He will say: 'I'm sorry' (the usual formula) 'but you can't come in.' Shall I burst into expressions of unavailing grief? No! I shall say: 'Well, that's all right. I don't care to go in. *I have been to Japan!*'

July 2, 1899: One of his letters gives an account of a musicale at his house. 'I have told you what a medley of foreigners there is here in Tokyo. At the music the other day there were present: Japanese, English, French, Germans, Spanish, Russians, Austrians, Belgians, (Count Orfini was to come, but couldn't, so no Italians), Americans — it's very amusing.'

TOKYO: *Nov.* 26, 1899

The height of domestic infelicity has toppled over upon me — I have no cook! Perhaps I have written to you about Cook-san? If not, let me say that he was a good cook — *crede experto* — would that I could add: he was a good man! He was a bad man and gambled. I put the police on his track and last evening a policeman came in to see me, a detective who wore a Japanese *kimono* over his uniform, with the top brass button plainly visible, and said he had caught my Soyer selling my coal to a neighbour. The hand of Themis was delayed for a few hours because we were to have four persons from Yokohama to tiffin with us to-day; but now we are cookless. Fortunately he had a restless night after seeing his guilty accomplice carried to *quod*, and cooked a large *tai* for tiffin and a big piece of beef, so that we shall have enough for dinner, and to-morrow comes an inferior successor who is to cook against Dr. B—— on Wednesday, and the Wedels Thursday night. But this is an awful

blow! The man is a perfect rascal, something like McKinley's vision of Aguinaldo; but he could cook. He made an excellent curry; and when my blowings-up persuaded him to buy good meat — it was his weak point to buy tough roasts at the (alleged) highest prices — I was content. Various diplomatists said: 'Whatever you do, don't send away that cook — but if you do, let me know!' Now, to share his dishes they must go to gaol. Will he there, in boiling rice for pickpockets and murderers, forget how to make doughnuts 'like mamma used to make'? I tell you life is sad. Such a rascal, however, you never saw in your life; but consider Byron, A. de Musset, Edgar A. Poe — genius is too often found joined with weakness. Let us rather discuss the virtues of J. M. Forbes, so far as they are portrayed in vol. I of the 'Life.' It is certainly an interesting book and well put together. An English biography is made in this wise: The biographer gets a dust-cart into which he shovels diaries, reminiscences, old letters, until the cart is full; then he dumps the load in front of your door: That is vol. I. Then he goes forth again on the same errand, and there is vol. II. Out of this rubbish the reader constructs a biography. You may be sure that the condensing machinery of the Quarterly Reviews would never have existed otherwise. Now, if I only had tact, I should point to the American Statesmen Series and say — all sorts of things.

Then there is the dear Dooley — how charming he is! How rare is humour! It's a good deal rarer than poetry — count the poets and you need a calculating machine. Count the humorists — an intelligent crow could do it! For my own part I do like Aristophanes, and enjoy Voltaire and Swift less. I think the eighteenth century English prose writers, save Addison, have been over-praised. I have been reading Smollett lately — he is a ruffian except in 'Humphrey Clinker,' and there he is often ruffianly. Dooley is delightful, and we are all most grateful to you for sending us two good books. You are an angel; you can't imagine how rare it is to get hold of anything to read out here. Instead I play continual tennis, and this I enjoy even more than literature.

6 P.M. How the cook clings! Has he been reading the above lines while I was out? Word came that he had persuaded the police that I was not really enangered, that I couldn't live without him, that my delicate appetite required — you know my hungry look — his constant attention. The force wept; *samurai* who would commit *harakiri* as you'd kill a mosquito, undid his shackles and sent the villain back. He is now preparing the meal of my life — possibly of my death, but civilization has scarcely reached that point here — I hope to eat it; but I am a perfect Joe Chamberlain and have moved my wines, and after coffee is served the great two-handed engine falls and I am where

I supposed I was when I began this letter. I feel now like a constitutional government when it changes its ministry. I age perceptibly.

But these trivial details can have no interest for a serious person like you. You are in a Florida castle, choosing one of eighteen soups and wishing you have taken any other of the seventeen. Next to coming to Japan I should recommend 'gumbo.' Within ten miles of wherever you may be, you will find it. It's a great dish. . . . The ideal of a soup is to ruin the rest of the dinner; it's a race between them, but the other fellow said: take only once of soup and several times of me.

28th: The old cook is gone, *vive* the new one! I won't go into the hideous particulars of our parting, but it spoiled for me a very jolly game of tennis: Key (Lt. U.S.N., attaché of ours) and Col. Churchill (of 12th Lancers) and Count Wedel (of German Legation), when we had them 6–3, 1–2. But I had to go, giving my place to Count Leyden, German Minister. He is a brother of Lady Blennerhassett (who wrote about Mme. de Staël) and a charming man. We have asked him to dine here December 7, when Dr. Koeber (a wonderful pianist and Professor of Philosophy at University) will play, and Junker, and Mrs. Payne of Yokohama will sing like a bird. The Wedels come this Thursday and hear Junker and Miss Koda. I hope the new cook is half as good as the old one. What do

you suppose I did yesterday? I had been asked by Mrs. Whitehead of English Legation to 'address' a number of Japanese and English ladies, a society revived by Mrs. W., who is like the Boston dame of fiction. Sir Ernest Satow (British Minister) opened the course with remarks on Queen Victoria. Of course I thought of continuing the series with an oration on Mrs. William McKinley, but I changed my mind and wrote a paper (largely drawn from J. Fiske's 'Beginnings of New England') on the sufferings of the Pilgrim mothers. This was read by me, with intervals for translation, paragraph by paragraph, into Japanese for the benefit of the natives. Apparently it went off smoothly. But imagine *me* lecturing on American history! This exceptional event of my life took place at Marquis Nabeshima's.

April 13, 1900

The rest of my family are going soon to Kyoto. I firmly refuse to go. . . . They say there are lakes and trees. True, but what is there in a lake except water. You murmur fish, but I prefer the salt water fish of Tokyo. I have seen all the pagan lakes I want to see. I want to see no more lakes west of Lakes Champlain and George — they are, especially George, lovely — and in the other direction none beyond those of Italy, even those of the Tyrol pall. And then, on account of Sirmio, I prefer that of Garda. What is scenery? You

can't look out of the window without seeing it! No, I have my impression of Japan and I will not be tempted to starvation by guide-books and hotel advertisements. I shall stay at home and play tennis. Does this remind you of the declining years of, say, Robert C. Winthrop (probably the most respectable person that either of us ever saw or ever will see, this side of heaven)? He didn't care to go gallivanting about to see pagan temples — and they *do* look a good deal alike — why should I?

KARIAZAWA, *Aug.* 2, 1900

There is no doubt that the consular service and methods of Great Britain are much superior to our own, yet the American haphazard way of picking a man out of a ragbag placed at Tientsin one far better than the product of English Civil Service. When Lyman was at T. the American warned him not to go to Peking, the Englishman told him there was no danger. Later, when the fighting began, our man, Mr. Ragsdale, urged the immediate capture of the arsenal; 'No,' said the Englishman; 'it belongs to the government, and we are not at war with the government.' His advice prevailed; but two hours later, fire was opened from the arsenal and it was taken with difficulty. In fact, no system can take the place of intelligence and I believe that if Ragsdale had been at Peking he would not, like C. in his despatch of May 21, have de-

manded a few marines! R. wired C., just before the outbreak, to send to Tientsin the women and children; C. laughed at him. An American missionary, in touch with the Chinese, went the night before to C. and warned him of the peril. C. went into his drawing-room in which were five ladies from Chicago, globe-trotters; they said: 'If there's going to be trouble, let's stay and see the fun.'

Baron Richthofen, whom I know, and is the German military attaché, escaped by the last train from P. I forgot to say that the American missionary also went to Sir Claude MacDonald and with the same success. You see, ministers don't like to be beholden to consuls and missionaries. It is a peculiarity of the human race that people appointed to a high position imagine themselves superior in knowledge to all others. I have at times observed this self-satisfaction even in Public Library trustees.

August 4: Now I hear that Vidal was in command of the French forces at the capture of Tientsin and was there wounded. You have doubtless read by this time Morrison's telegram to London 'Times,' for which we must wait till we get American papers. I would give a good deal to see it. Here our peaceful sports go on, interrupted only by the occasional shower, and once by the greatest bore I ever knew. He has an entertainment to-morrow morning 'to bring people together,' but we prefer to remain coldly apart. He told me that he once

crossed the Pacific with R. Kipling who had one curious habit: he would run off before conversation could get into a serious channel. My friend was unable to explain this eccentricity. There's a queer lot of people here, as everywhere.

August 10: This abortive attempt at a letter must leave here to-day at 11.30 A.M. I had meant to send you a noble 3-decker, but Fate saw otherwise. All that I could have told you would have been about tennis, for beyond that my interest goes not. Then, moreover, that vile tub the City of Rio de Janeiro, due three days since, has shown no sign up to date, and the letters which I meant to answer have brought no inspiring theme to my venal pen. You, I presume, are busy entertaining Cubans at your hospitable mansion on the North Shore, but the true inwardness of this plan will be revealed when the autumn comes and the good Cambridge person returns to his quarters and counts his household goods. Then there will be fun and more bad language will be used about C. W. E. the Great, who, besides setting the Church of Rome by the ears, has now roused the temperate to fury against him. His most lovable quality is the discrimination he shows in making enemies.

KARIAZAWA, *Sept.* 3, 1900

Here is the day approaching when an 'Empress' departs and I have no line to the good. The fact is

that my brain, once robust enough to grapple with whole libraries, and, if they were lost, to replace them, eager to wrestle with disputed questions of theology, economy (political), ethics, æsthetics, is now a deliquescent jelly. It's tennis has done it. My wrist hangs by a single tendon; my elbow is the abode of torture, but I go on playing and when not playing, I talk of nothing else. The Chinese empire crumbles; historic Peking falls, my only interest is to pass my antagonist by a cross-court drive. It's a most melancholy change.

Other news have I none. Dr. Crusen has been spending a week here and left yesterday; others come and go. The weather is *perfect*, but the days rapidly draw nigh when I must meet my young charges and talk with them for two hours a day on English literature. I shall try to change my chair for that of manly games. My pupils are in sad need of a competent instructor in *the* game.

We have received the amorous correspondence of the Brownings, but I've not read a word of their puling. (It looks interesting, the book, I merely insult literature when I use that word.) The 'Evening Post' (semi-weekly) comes, very irregularly, to my door, but it really deserves to be called *puling*. It's become a poor paper.

Moorfield Storey had a mighty heavy load in Charles Sumner,[1] who ought to be immortalised in

[1] Referring to the *Life of Sumner*, written by Storey for American Statesmen Series.

a huge statue and then left to oblivion. He was always a thing of marble, never a human being. I heard him uttering one of his machine-made orations in 1864 in the City Hall, Cambridgeport, and the impression was ghastly; but you know what he was.

I have read Bryan's speech, which I find infinitely more interesting than any of Charles's. He certainly makes a good showing as well as belated wisdom in making imperialism an issue. But you can't want my belated remarks on American politics, which come from the sort of XVIIIth-century seclusion and quiet one enjoys in Japan. That is a distinctive quality of the exile's life, its immunity from the rush and hustle of the U.S.A. It doubtless has its disadvantages as well as its comfort, but I will cheerfully accept both. I hope you will be equally patient and accept this disadvantage that it leaves me at the beginning of sheet III with nothing to say.

KARIAZAWA, *Sept.* 9, 1900

Earth hath very little to show more fair than Kariazawa on a day like this, when the first softened touch of autumn is in the air and the sun blazes like mad on the green earth and the blue hills. It's my last week here that now begins. Sunday next I go to Tokyo, being harbored at S. Andrew's, the clergy-house where I was in June. They are kind men and true, eager in their work, but

tolerant of the sinner even if they suspect him of Arianism or worse. They have a good many books in their library and I divert myself with reading the theologians' defense of their theory of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. I can hardly refrain from expressing my views of their arguments aloud. They have also profane books which are more entertaining. One can smoke all over the house and beer is supplied. I believe the Wedels are back, so tennis will be there; and the Grubissiches go down on Wednesday, so that fashionable circles will soon be wholly rounded, rounded up. I hope Colonel Churchill will still be there; he saw the whole march to Peking as English military attaché observing the Japanese, and he will be able to give me a most exact account. Miss C—— S——, who stayed in Peking 'to see the fun,' has also returned, but her testimony about the siege would be less trustworthy. I can only say that, if there was enough food for that young lady, there must have been at the beginning a large stock of provisions at the British Legation. I am sure to pick up a good deal of information at Tokyo which I shall communicate.

The present turn of affairs there amazes and distresses me. The Empress Dowager will simply be in power again and all the fun will be repeated very soon. But I won't talk about it. . . .

The fact is, all the lame ducks drift to this land where whiskey is cheap and abundant, the work

light, expenses moderate. It's a sort of Botany Bay of demi-reputable exile. I shan't be sorry to get even to America to see *men* once more. In Corea I shall see Gubbins and then too I hope to taste some mutton there. I must write to G. some gastronomic suggestions about the dinners which he will surely give me. Of course our going depends on the state of affairs in that savage country.

September 11: Bow, wow, wow! Fortunately I was called off to the tennis field and so you are spared a diluted editorial. This is a day of heavenly perfection; its sweetness is to me enhanced by the fact that this is the day and this the happy morn in which the Keiogijiku opens its doors to its pupils. But where is the stalwart form of the beloved Professor of English Literature? Is the good man ill? We miss his genial presence. No, the good man is not ill, but he knows that no work begins till Monday next, and so instead of wasting a week in Tokyo he lingers among his beloved hills, at the end of the day running out to toss a ball not less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, nor more than $2\frac{9}{16}$ inches in diameter; and not less than $1\frac{7}{8}$ ounces nor more than 2 ounces in weight, over a net 3 feet 6 inches high at the post and 3 feet at the centre. He is a wise man.

TOKYO, *September* 29, 1900

I am now back in my happy home, but alone! My once devoted family lingers in the hills, but I

returned to the old stand this P.M. . . . I occupy this great big house alone. I confess that it is somewhat amusing. My kurumaya has been tireless all day; he and his little girl have been scrubbing and sweeping. I went to the grocer's and bought bread, salt, coffee, a coffee pot, a tin of Armour's (or was it neighbour Swift's?) sliced ham, a tin of roast chicken, *do.* German sausages, *do.* baked beans (tomato sauce! I confess I should never have thought of the combination) — At that point last evening, just when I was dilating on my preparations for a R. Crusoe life, a telegram was brought me, announcing that E. and the servants are to arrive this P.M., so civilization promises to resume its sway. . . .

I have been reading 'Thirty Years of American Finance' by A. D. Noyes, Putnam, 1898. Do you know it? If not, do not fail to read it; it is thrillingly interesting, as interesting as a novel and as sad as the blackest work of a pessimistic realist (as if a realist could be anything but a pessimist). Upon my word, the evil nature of man seems to be his chief claim to distinction, and it appears to grow more rampant every day. I should like to have a semi-rural corner where I could feed pets (hens if they could suppress their odious hiccoughs, cocks if they wouldn't crow) and potter over flowers. This nest of mine should be within easy reach of, say, Paris, at any rate some vast city with huge libraries and many pictures, new and old, with lots

of theatres and concert rooms. In the other direction there must be good roads leading to picturesque towns and ruins and cathedrals. There must be a good tennis court on the place, and for neighbours four tennis cranks. Then I should let the wicked world go hang. You will see that I am not describing Tokyo.

9 P.M. September 30: E. arrived with A. at 5.30, an hour late, but from no fault of theirs. They left Cooksan at the station to see about bringing up the other things. This was well; whereas in general I would throw overboard many things to save the cook. I to-day approved of this arrangement because the Venerable Archdeacon [1] had spoken to me of an excellent restaurant not five minutes' walk from here. He described it in such a way that my mouth watered and I was obliged to ask him to give me another slice of beef. From his account it was like a sudden revival of the *Trois frères*. I yearned for evening to come. It came and I suggested to the unsuspecting infants how necessary it was to consider the cook; 'spare that good man extra toil!' 'Let us open a tin of army beef, or, better, let us go to the neighbouring restaurant.' We went, but the Archdeacon ain't no glutton; he does not discriminate with the expert talent of a sinner. The place was amusing; we were treated with Oriental

[1] He had lunched, on the day before, with Archdeacon Shaw.

courtesy and, I regret to say, with somewhat Oriental food. I do think that we dropt in at an unfortunate moment; but it was very fair.

Tokyo, *November* 10, 1900

While you have been fussing about the upholstery of the White House, I have been more seriously employed with my dinner last night to which came the Isvolskys. (He is the new Russian Minister here; he has passed five years in Rome, two in Munich and was mentioned as Mouravieff's successor. He'll be that yet.) She is a charming woman, like a Boston dame. (Ask Mrs. M. if I could utter higher praise, if you can't answer the question yourself.) We had, to meet them, the Paynes of Yokohama (Mrs. P. as accompanist), and Baron Kendell, who is unattached, and ourselves. We had in an extra cook and the wines were fairly good, but there's this advantage in having intelligent diplomatists to dine, that they have so many rich dinners to eat that they eat nothing outside and probably at home gnaw a slice of toast and drink a cup of hot water. Thus only do they survive the incessant hospitality which attacks them. I have no doubt that Sir Claude's starvation at Peking has done him more good than barrels of Enos's Fruit Salts would have done. Isvolsky is by all odds the brightest man in Tokyo; that is cool praise; indeed, I might be suspected of sarcasm — he is one of the brightest men I have ever met. Now this is over,

we have before us a ball, Comte de Guichen (of French Legation) at Imperial Hotel, Monday night. Wednesday there is something which I forget. Friday, Junker and Mrs. Mordhorst, from Shanghai, dine here and music is made.

Saturday, the University Club of Keiogijiku gives a horrid squatting dinner, to which I shall go after careful preparation, for it's a Japanese dinner (as *squatting* implies) and my preparation will consist in eating, just before I go, a square meal at home. That beneath the belt, I shall be able to play with chopsticks (alas, the only chops to be found in this God-forsaken country!), to begin a meal with oranges and end it with raw oysters — these Japanese meals are *awful*, even for a cosmopolitan like me. I was so amused at a garden-party the other day, at Count Okuma's, to see the Japanese really happy only when they could gobble with chopsticks. But I become gluttonous. Pardon me! it's the hour before dinner — I *become* gluttonous (thus do we acquit ourselves of every fault), I *am* gluttonous, as you well know and will often, I hope, see. I'm no diplomatist. When a good dinner is put before me, I eat it. If you doubt this, wait till I come back and invite me in. Have me weighed before and after the repast!

I can't think what it is for Wednesday. I didn't write it down on either the engagement tablets which our friend W. B. Clarke sends out every year (under number 100 they are supplied) or

those of my foolish brain. I said to myself, *that* can never be forgotten — yes, I do know, it's a garden-party. This is their season here. You stroll about on the damp ground, pretend to admire stringy chrysanthemums, are offered food, watch jugglers, etc., and go home. The only trouble about them is the necessity of wearing a top hat. My saddest burden in Japan is trying to make mine last till I go. The other day I had it refreshed for ten cents, and now it shines like a crown, and I hope to pull it through and then to sell it for more than I paid for it in Paris, six and one half years ago. . . .

I mean to send you, possibly by this ship — if not, then by next — two poems, published in the number of the 'Keiogijiku Monthly,' which I received last evening. I think they will amuse you. I know that they amused me. I don't know the poet; at least I don't recall him, and I know he is not one of my few pupils. It is a mania of the more accomplished students of English to want to burst into poetry. One young gentleman who knew English really well, brought me an effusion, but only one. It was an ode on a tree which his father had sold and was to be carried away and put in some other man's garden. He wept about this tree and embraced it — it was most amusing. As for rhythm, etc., well, I fancy that if Virgil and Horace had to read much neo-Latin verse they would come across eye-openers as well as eye-shutters. At next Saturday's banquet I shall try to get hold

of this poet, who seems to have a touch of talent, but it's a dangerous thing to trifle with another language. The other day I came across this phrase (wasn't it in 'Athenæum' of September 22?) *Dixisse me aliquando poenituit, tacuisse nunquam,* — and that I am going to make my motto. It's a pretty phrase, how much better than if *poenituit* read *placuit*! *Jam satis prattlendi!*

March 1, 1901

The Grubissiches tiffined with us (their Sunday habit), and they bade us good-bye. . . . He has been chargé d'affaires (Austria-Hungary) ever since we have been here and we have seen and loved them much. His wife was a Countess Pourtalès (cousin of Mrs. Braggiotti). It racks our heart to part from them, but we hope to see them in the autumn. . . . All these things make us yearn to leave. The dear G.s were our best friends and parting was most torturous. They call me 'Uncle Tom.' A Mrs. Mordhorst of Shanghai was here in the autumn, and, hearing me thus addressed, asked: Why? I said: 'It's because, of course, I am Mme. de G.'s slave, and the only American slave she has ever heard of was called "Uncle Tom."'

Kamakura, *May* 23, 1901

You may thank your stars that you have been spared a Japanese telegram. My wife, as you know, is at Iwabuchi. M. was to wire to-day whether or

not A. was to go there to-morrow. To-night the despatch comes in Japanese. Does it say 'come' or 'stay'? Neither. It's as vague as a Latin inscription and runs something like this: 'To go might be well.' The Japs have no word to distinguish between you, me, and the port. The verb, so far as it is a verb, means go, come; stay, leave; start, arrive; mount, descend; wake, sleep; yes, no; anything you please; so all that we know is that there existed an emotion finding expression in telegraphy. We consult the cook — he's a good man and consequently not so good a cook as his villainous predecessor, but a great scholar; he seems as vague as you or I would be if we should dig up a Greek inscription in our aristocratic back yard. So we turn to the tailor, but even he, who commands English, can't decide whether it means: 'We go away to-morrow,' or: 'I [= M.] go away to-morrow,' or: 'Come you to-morrow.' They are agreed that it means one of these things or something of the sort. This is true, and isn't it odd? Do you now begin to understand what the Oriental is? Imagine your swell and, I should judge, colossally rich brother awaiting an order to buy or sell from Rockefeller, and receiving a despatch which in half an hour is said to mean: 'Exchange of commodities at times advisable.' I know *he* wouldn't do anything of the sort, but *I* did swear. Yes, here we have the antipod at spring-tide and just as we can't understand them, they can't understand why

I worry so. It means *go* or *stay*, why toss up the brain with idle questions? It's really the most devilish language ever invented, and this instance shows how near it come to expressing anything. It suits the people about as well as Latin would suit Harvard graduates of three years' standing. I trust I have made my trouble clear to you. I generally do manage to communicate my woes to the bystanders when I have any; I ain't no Japanese telegram.

May 24: And now on getting letters, it turns out that the despatch means that M. is going away and A. must go to Iwabuchi — what they all said it didn't mean. Don't imagine it was M.'s defective Japanese. A Japanese servant, understanding the message, sent it as well as she could through the defective medium. Even their own notes and letters they understand with difficulty. It is the vaguest language in the world.

May 27: Just back from Dzushi where we took a walk to a very beautiful temple and then after tiffin we sailed back: a most delightful day.

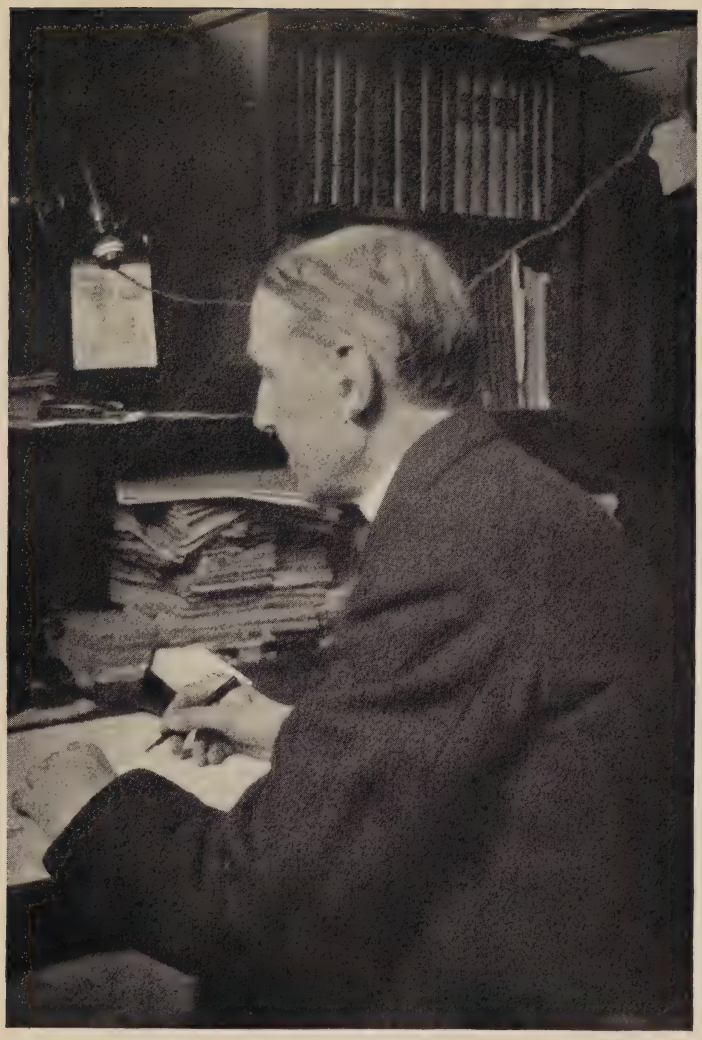
CHAPTER VII

HANCOCK

October 1, 1903: 'I have become a Deserted Farmer, having bought 60 acres of land and a good-sized inhabitable house at Hancock, N.H., 6 miles from Dublin and Peterboro; fine air, 1500 feet elevation, orchard, water abundant, cool. My wife went up, saw, loved. I sent up Margaret to report and then we bought, I giving my assent on condition I shouldn't have to go to look at it.'

Thus Perry wrote. A more precisely accurate statement might be that, in the autumn of 1903 Mrs. Perry bought the land and buildings which were to be developed into the farm known as 'Flagstones.' It lay in the ancient little town of Hancock, among the foothills in the southern part of New Hampshire, not far from the fashionable Dublin. The ancient house was set in good modern order and the following summer the family moved in. Save for four summers in Giverny it was to be, for the rest of his life, Perry's summer residence, and gradually summers came to absorb springs and autumns.

Perry had once remarked that until he was twenty-five years old he had never seen anything of the country, save by looking through car windows, and apparently this somewhat unsatisfactory



THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY
About 1906

view had not greatly interested him. But he now resolved to try at least to be philosophical even at this remote distance from the Boston Public Library. It is true that, subsequent to the visions from the car window, the family had naturally been in the habit of passing summers in one or another rural town in the neighborhood of Boston — five years in Duxbury, for example, where they had a cottage and passed four summers — and thus Perry had gathered some little inkling of country life. In 1903 they were at Readville, whence he wrote this very moderate approval of things rustic: 'We have a little garden . . . devoted to useful products, tomatoes, beans, etc. On the whole I approve of the country; its color is monotonous; but air is abundant and so is quiet.' One afternoon, sitting with him on his piazza there, I remarked upon a handsome tree hard by. 'Yes,' he said, 'that is a chestnut tree. I know it is because I have found chestnuts under it. That other one, over there, they tell me is an ash tree, but I don't believe it, for I have often looked under it and never found any ashes.'

It is narrated of Dr. Johnson, lexicographer, that one fine day, when Boswell suggested an excursion into the country, the great man listened, shrugged his clumsy shoulders, and said, 'Let's take a walk down Piccadilly.' For a long while Perry almost shared the sentiments of the distinguished dictionary-maker. But his wife was an artist; his daugh-

ter was an agriculturist; one painted the mountains and the trees; the other cultivated the fields and kept cattle. So by slow infiltration rustic interests worked their way into the crevices of Perry's nature. He had too, by his temperament, always an intense desire to know everything that he could learn on every subject. So with the slow but sure passage of time, equally slowly and surely, an interest in the farm and its surroundings became infused into him. Later on, as he grew older and vigor somewhat decreased, he began genuinely to enjoy lounging about the poultry houses and the barnyard, and thus got upon terms of something like personal friendship and even confidential intimacy with cows and hens.

Soon after the agricultural business got seriously under way, it was of course found necessary to have the services of a horse. Thereupon Perry, who certainly had never before in his life been on intimate terms with any horse, invoked my aid and so became the owner of an honest, useful animal of very dark complexion, muscular build, and reasonably industrious disposition. I notified Perry that I would send the animal up over the road; but he replied in haste: 'I must have expressed myself very badly. I never thought of having the horse come here *on foot!* I meant to have him sent *by train,* in a private car — rather like a multimillionaire, with an attendant to bathe his fevered brow and to give him food, read to him, fan him,

etc., etc.' By good fortune this worthy animal, instead of being spoiled by such unfamiliar luxury, turned out a success. Perry became attached to him, and for many years continued to speak of him, and for that matter to him, as if he were a fellow-being and a friend. One winter 'John Hancock' was in delicate health, and came to pass a few months at my stable at Pride's Crossing. In October, before the horse started, Perry wrote: 'I have read your letter to John Hancock — he says your handwriting is not so good as his — and he is simply delighted. I told him what a privilege it is to be in so aristocratic a neighborhood and sanctified too by the recent presence of Taft. But I hope he will not be spoiled, and that your brother's horse will not whisper to him that it is in the nature of a disgrace to haul manure or do other coarse farm work. You laugh at my admiration of his excellence, but he is really an admirable being. . . . Just try him some day when all *your* horses are lame!' The following May, when this remarkable animal was sent home, Perry wrote: 'I hasten to announce the arrival of John Hancock at the home of his fathers. He is in excellent condition and in the best of spirits. He bears no traces of disabling illness. His complexion is in admirable condition; his eyes bright; his appetite altogether unimpaired. The change of air does him good already.'

Here is another letter, this time about the poultry: 'Margaret went off for a visit a week ago and

left me in charge of the feathered chucklers and my empty heart soon learned to love them, and their flattering eagerness when I approach with their always welcome meals. Did you ever notice how they would kiss your hand? They flock about me with an enthusiasm no human being ever shows; they rejoice so pleasantly when they hand me their eggs that my tardy affection tries to atone for my prolonged indifference to their charms.'

October 16, 1921: 'You ought to be here to-day. It is a marvel. The autumn foliage display is at its best. The day is just like a jewel, and its edges, so painful when clear, are softened with a lovely, not mist but atmosphere. If we had only one such day in our life, we should never forget it. Yesterday I had a good walk in the flaming woods and shall have another later to-day. . . . Come up to the hill-tops and see the gorgeous show we are opening. This is Foliage Week. We are holding back some of our best trees for you to see.'

June 19, 1922: 'Even an amateur farmer like you, who took up the hoe and plough after having exhausted the pleasures of the forum and the stock exchange, when you are palled of club life and wearied of the hollow shams of society, even you, I say, must have noticed how singularly ill-fitted is the present scheme of things for hay-making. While, on the one hand, the growing grass is crammed with succulent juices by the bounteous rainfall, on the other, the ironical Providence

makes hay-making impossible. We cut a lot of clover three or four days ago, and now? Go ask a pilot! A lady who shares with me the agonies of farming is firmly convinced in her narrow theology that our cutting the clover is the sole and sufficient cause of this prolonged precipitation. Then with the inconsequence that so strongly marks the bewitching sex I am raised to the rank of Deity and am held personally responsible for the bad weather. Further than this, by a series of sad mischances we have failed to receive all our Saturday mails; our last word from the great world was an early edition of last Friday's 'Transcript.' Since then many eloquent speeches may have been uttered in Congress; more Irishmen have certainly been killing other Irishmen; Lloyd George has shifted his views and utterances at least three times; the Russians have quite as often expressed a perfectly natural detestation of the wicked capitalists who uphold the old-fashioned idea that money borrowed should ever be returned; the Germans have found more reasons for not paying their dues. All these things have gone on, and we know nothing; — besides the brilliant social news, the horrid accidents, etc., etc.'

June 5, 1922: 'Your first question will be about the birds — not the chattering kind that human beings are trying to exterminate, but their larger brothers who have learned from long association with mankind how difficult it is to fly, — in other

words: hens. We have secured the presence of ten already. They seem to be contented, and, so far, to escape the ravages of homesickness, which I gather, sometimes blights their lives. If I am wrong, you will know, but at least I can assure you that our little brood shows no pallor, or loss of appetite, and I hear no wailing. Sometimes, it is true, they sit and seem to ponder, but I have no reason to suppose that they are thinking of their former home.

'We are aided in our farm work by a veteran, a real veteran, not a youth of 20 or 30, thus misnamed in the newspapers. He went through the Civil War with credit and having turned his sword into a ploughshare, does therewith his share of the ploughing for us, or at least of various agricultural exercises. He belongs to those wonderful men born about 1840, who far outdo the crop of 1809, and ripening slowly, reach the prime of life about 1920+. He is very kind to me and seems to take delight in swinging his scythe and showing me how fields were won. He of course looks upon me as a mere child — all the men of his age do — and answers my questions with unwearying kindness. That rude sketch shows how he takes me by the hand and lets me walk along by his side after work is done. I started too

high to get him all in, but the legs (*ex pede Herculem*) will indicate what the limner failed to render. It is just as well, I couldn't do justice to his wise battle-scarred face and its benign expression.'

September 14, 1910: 'If you wrote on poultry you will find me a most eager reader. For this summer I have learned to know, and to know is to love, the long despised fowl. They seem to me to stand, in respect to intelligence, very near the human race, and I watch their familiar antics with the keenest interest, their punctuality at meals, their greediness, their absurd leaving a rich store of food for another uncertain collection, their panicky terrors, their perfectly unmeaning and unending chatter — they are human beings over again. I hate human beings. I have transferred my interest to the feathered fowl of the barnyard. And, as with human beings, there are such differences between individuals. We have one, a Rhode Island Red, that I am devotedly attached to. The little creature is so tame that she feeds out of my hand, lets me stroke her back. She is more than a producer of strictly fresh eggs, she is a friend. I now can sympathize with your hennery, and when we meet I shall torment you with questions. Perhaps you, who represent a sort of trust, a soulless corporation, do not know the individual so well as Margaret and I know our fifteen.'

August 18, 1911: 'I return from a manly struggle with the Colorado beetles. We give them Paris

green which is good for their complexion; mixed with plaster we find it an admirable cosmetic for the exiled insects. It may encourage you in rugged toil at Needham to know how much money we make out of our farm. . . . We sell the produce of the farm that we don't eat, or which is not eaten by our horse, cow, pigs, hens. Everything we sell we count for profit; we keep most rigid accounts with accurate bookkeeping by single entry, i.e., you put down what you gain and don't record what you spend, which would be double entry, something now abandoned by modern bookkeepers. . . . We are the leading purveyors of Hancock. Mrs. Perry's Swiss chard is as well known as William Tell or Mont Blanc; her beans, famous even in New England; her turnips are superior to other people's Bartlett pears. Just now we have on the veranda 24 ears of corn awaiting transport to the great metropolis where they will at once avert a threatened famine. Your miserable egg-selling is mere retail business by the side of ours. Then we are anxious to get into touch with our swell neighbors in Dublin who are bountifully blessed with this world's goods. I think of getting a market-wagon, bearing an inscription "From Producer to Consumer" or "From Farm to Diningroom," and selling at the back door of the many palatial residences that dot the hills at that loveliest of mountain shrines.'

July 9, 1911: 'Dear John: How did you survive

the fervent heat? In fact, did you survive it? Here, of course, it was different, and while your hens were laying hard-boiled eggs my cow was giving us ice-cream. What I now dread is drouth and the emptiness of my wells, etc. . . . Last week I spent at Kittery Point, Maine, with Howells, who is about to leave for England. My absence coincided with a change of cooks in temporary anarchy.'

May 25, 1910: 'We got up here Friday last . . . and are busy getting settled and arranging the farm. I can dimly see that one might become interested in agriculture, but I am still rather averse toward the incessant manual toil that it calls for. I hate to pinch my fingers and to scratch them, and above all things to crouch down to the earth and bend myself after a fashion condemned by all works of hygiene. Still, L. and M. are more than happy. They adore grubbing in the earth. I have instead read Chesterton's delightful 'Browning.' One will have to search long for a writer like him.'

As I am, or thus far in this chapter have been, discoursing on Perry's relations with domestic animals, I may venture to 'lug' in an amusing story from one of his letters. It is true that the locus was not in Hancock, but even so far away as remote France; yet the tale is bucolic and amusing:

September 15: 'At that point I gave up prosing

and started for the tennis court on my wheel. You would have laughed to see me chased by a cow through the main street of Giverny; the *vache enragée*, who wanted to catch me, being herself pursued by all the dogs in the village. You may be farmer enough to know that the run of a cow, so utterly graceless, is as swift as a horse's gallop. So the few spectators were much interested as I made record time, beating the cow by several seconds. It was a miniature John-Gilpin ride, substituting cycle for horse.'

CHAPTER VIII

LETTERS FROM HANCOCK

HANCOCK, N.H.

THIS is an interesting day, not merely as the anniversary of the Battle of Hastings, in which my ancestors took a prominent part. The expression 'We have met the enemy and they are ours' was then first uttered, in Norman French, by the Black Prince, my revered great-grandfather. 'Nous avons rencontré l'ennemi, et il est à nous,' he said, and the expression is now proverbial in the family.

I write to you because I am very busy packing. My trunk leaves the house in a few minutes and I am told that I must pack it. It is in vain that I point out how much easier it is to handle empty; I must pack it, so I begin by writing to you.

This day is interesting for another reason. We have outside a curious peripatetic sawmill in active operation. It can do anything, perhaps it can pack my trunk. I will see. It is the latest device of human ingenuity and moves with occasional loud gasoline reports, so that returning a moment ago from the village I thought a 'feud' was raging round the house. You see it is percussive, something like an automobile. In fact I think it must be the product of the strange union of a sawhorse with

an automobile. It goes through my wood as fast as a spell of cold weather.

I really must pack, the load is nearly full. I expect to appear in Boston Monday and shall knock at your door *vers* 6 *heures*, when I've unpacked, so I must pack now.

[There can be no doubt that the packing was *not* done by Perry's hands.]

October 1, 1919

A beautiful, calm, gray autumn day. It's a wonderful season and much more fascinating than the summer when nature has everything to think about except how she looks. The hideous greenness disappears and one begins to see things. Then instead of a metallic sky one has sombre clouds, I love them and with dauntless awe I face an icy bathroom.

I send you to-day the notice of Dooley, which I think will amuse you. The 'New Republic,' from which I take it, is a most contemptible paper, pacifist during the war, pro-German and pro-Bolshevik at every opportunity and howling for the new liberty with no definition of what they mean by it; but it is popular, for just as people turn over in bed, they want a change. In this case they want liberty to rob and kill every one else. As you have heard me say, this is a serious world.

I may also send you one of Reedy's papers. He amuses me, because he is no sentimentalist, he

isn't fascinated by words, he tries to look things in the face. To be sure, there are so many things to be looked at that he sometimes squints, but he means well. He represents a good type of the average idiot whom the populace like to have teach them, and is a sweeter character than the mincing parlor socialists of the other paper. . . .

To-day I see the human tigers go forth to collect millions for Harvard College. I must say I pity you. I can picture the vultures on every roof ready to sweep down on you with demand for a great deal more than you can give. They have probably put you down anywhere between 10 and 100 thousand, and you, if you are wise, are creeping out of your backdoor, disguised as a choreman, and making your way to Needham. I should think those self-sacrificing collectors would have dull work; they can't touch anything like a satisfactory commission, and the arguments they can bring up must be already well known to the highly educated graduates of the college. I don't see really what they can say, as they hold you up, except, 'Your money or your life,' and there is nothing original in that. Still far be it from me to sneer at any broad movement of the community toward enlarging diminished incomes. 'Tis a noble aim, and it should not be limited as it is in the beginning; it should permeate the community. Is democracy safe when only one small class, accustomed to penury, is thus suddenly enriched? Let them continue to set an ex-

ample to the world; they know by experience how to make a penny go farther than anyone else can send it, why despoil them of that merit? Suddenly made wealthy they will doubtless begin to gamble, to buy costly motor cars and never look at the swifter underground between Cambridge and town. That is always the result of a sudden prosperity. It would go against my conscience, always delicate, to expose them to these violent temptations. No, I have my answer ready for these hungry solicitors, and I can add, when they recite the little piece they have learned by heart about how much we owe the college for our comparatively free education, that I gave the college nine years of my teaching, such as it was, for a very minute emolument. . . .

We regret Hugh Cabot's departure. I had always, as it were, chosen him for my, not executor but executioner, I mean the surgeon who comes in when your case is hopeless and all you ask is to die quietly, and cuts you open and takes out whatever he can find and after sewing you up lets you die in misery. I shouldn't care to live in —— and bring up children there, but he knows what he wants. Boston is merely a decaying town like Salem.

HANCOCK, N.H.
October 2, 1919

Another autumn day, and I must say I like the gloomy ones. Ever since living in Paris, which is sombre all winter, I have an owl-like hatred of the

garish sun. These North American days with their metallic sky, the blazing light, the sharp-cut shadows, the entire absence of atmosphere, always seem to me like a new house, all enamel paint and hard American marble polished by machinery and every Mazda lamp turned on the gilding and the varnished furniture. I hate it. But these darkish days I love.

I told you of our crops; but do I feel any gratitude for them? Not a bit. I have been rigorously examining my soul to see if I could find any trace of the virtue, but it is not there. Unless I am a moral freak, there is little gratitude anywhere. It has seldom manifested itself to me in others in the few cases when I have expected it and rather tried to bring it out. I think it is a pure invention of teachers of ethics. Of course they have none themselves, but they think others should cultivate it.

Instead of gratitude I find in my heart the feeling that at last my merit has been acknowledged, that a beginning has been made to treat me as I deserve. I have good crops; of course I have good crops, they were carefully tended and what is Nature for except to serve us? I don't thank the sun for shining, why turn pagan and grow enthusiastic over all the natural phenomena? No, at the great Last Day when I am called up before listening myriads and am asked: 'Did you ever feel gratitude?' 'No.' 'Even when people did things for you? Remember Mr. Morse.' 'No.' 'Go thou to

the place prepared for you since the foundation of the world,' etc. (Now it's beginning to rain, but it won't rain *there*.) Don't for a moment imagine that, though I intend to be full of it, I have really any gratitude for your exertions in behalf of my calabash pipe. In the first place, you didn't get any pipe; and secondly, if you had, I should have said all the polite things, as I did, in order to soothe you and to make you ready for the next time. Thanking is something that is often emitted, but the real feeling never exists. There is no such thing, at least in me. So you see the New World has to get on with beauties, virtues and new vices.

Did you see the aurora borealis illumination last night? It was very successful, and only marred by the moonlight that was turned on very brilliantly at the same time and somewhat dimmed the effect. It was really a great show and well worth looking at. Does it betoken trouble in the state? or a cold winter? or what?

We are all at work as busy as bees with the crops and their various duties. A soapstone stove that L. bought last autumn does admirable work in keeping the house warm, which nothing else could do. It's really quite marvellous. The soapstone stove is something that the world will never see again. This one was made in Peterborough with soapstone mined at Francestown, about a dozen miles from here; but the mine is exhausted, the factory has been put out of business together with

all the various industries of the little town, and the soapstone stove is as obsolete as the little square foot-warmers with which our grandmothers went to church.

The 'Athenæum' dares to say this of our modern Sappho: 'We know a good deal of Miss L., who has long been a familiar figure in the anthologies of revolt; Miss L. is, we are persuaded, a negligible poet, with a tenuous and commonplace impulse to write, which she teases out into stupid "originalities."' Is not the paper full of international hatred and of jealousy? There can be no other explanation.

It would not take a great fall in the therm. to turn this rain into snow, which may fall at any time now, and yet we have had no real frost on this place. The worst has been mere nibbling at the tenderest leaves of the tenderest plants, beans and squash. I saw blossoms on a bean bush yesterday and my tomatoes are so abundant that we can't bring them all in but shall let a million or so freeze. It is with a feeling of wickedness that we do this, but it can't be helped. The lack of sugar struck preserving about here right and left, but we managed to get some when we most needed it, tho' in an interval L. did her best to dry some of the native grapes, to make raisins, which she saw were going to be high! Fair idealist! The experiment was an absolute failure, and she lost the moment when the grape was about to ferment and I prayed that she devote the mess to its legitimate task — in vain.

HANCOCK, N.H.
October 3, 1919

I am back from Peterborough. I found the barber in and unoccupied; he set to work and now my head has resumed its normal appearance, and looks like a Greek bust, or one that inculcates the science of phrenology, except that of course it is not disfigured with numbered counties or townships. M. says it is cut awfully, but women know nothing of such things. I have not yet applied the acid test of a hand mirror to a large looking-glass. At any rate the high price of Commonth Avenue has not reached Peterborough.

Then too — oh, hallelujah — I found a place where they had some calabash pipes. I bo't one. I am happy. I can't say that the canny Greek who sold them was unaware of their rise in value, and I had to pay what would have been a good instalment on a meerschaum a few years ago, just twice what Cabot paid for each of his treasured store; but it's a good pipe, and the man won't sell another very soon when he has inferior ones at 50 cts.; and I shall get another later.

So I think my little trip was successful. Even if the barber did no justice to my appearance, was no real tonsorial artist, why should I complain? I am at least free from the odious fringe.

The trip was heavenly. To be sure the sun was shining, but its brilliancy was tempered by a delicious haze, and the trees are getting into their best

colour. There were stretches of meadow with cattle, and wooded hills beyond, and much water — the majestic Contoocook — it was very fine indeed, quite remarkable. P. is a very pretty town. I shouldn't mind spending the summer there, for it has many of the charms of our fading civilization — such as early arrival of Boston paper, town water, electricity, butcher and other shops after their kind, as well as lovely walks; but then it lies in a valley and is hot in summer, there is no denying that; but I like my Nature tempered by what man has accomplished in the last million years. It is possible to be too raw. Give me a judicious mixture so long as we have a little civilization to draw on.

HANCOCK, N.H.
October 4, 1919

This is so dark a day that it may almost be called dingy. We are, like the children of Israel, or somebody, in a cloud. As Mr. Parmenter, who is working for me, said, it is not good haying weather. But yesterday was perfect. I spoke coolly of the trip to Peterborough, but what it reminded me of was the two-page picture at the end of my grandmother's copy of 'Pilgrim's Progress.' It represented the agitated career of the good Christian toward Jerusalem the Golden and ended in a blaze of color; this blaze of color was outdone by the trees twixt here and Peterborough. It was really one of the great scenes of my life, most impressive. Besides

that, little has been done. My pipe is very sweet at the start — a marvellous thing and dependent on the Lord knows what. Sometimes one starts sour, hot, odious and takes much time to get into shape. It was, you see, a blessed day.

As for the hair-cut, I am able to say, after prolonged study of my trimmed poll, that, given a few weeks' growth, I shall not have to sneak into Schneider's saloon so timidly as I did last year, and shan't meet those glances of horror that positively appalled me then. No, I shall be quite myself and shall turn down any offensive comments on the gnawing of hedgehogs and porcupines with a haughty stare. However, judging from the conversation of the goddesses who rule my fate, there will be time enough for another haircut before I meet those critical eyes; for there is so much to do and so few to do it that it seems as if another spring would come before we get this autumn cleared away. Yet when the cold comes and water pipes freeze we shall pack and run. . . .

Did it ever occur to you that the bean must be one of the latest products of Nature or Providence, or whatever it may be that founded the kitchen-garden? My reason for thus interpreting the past is, that while other plants exhaust the soil, the humble bean draws nutriment from the air and tries its best to repay the debt the other plants have made. Have you ever seen? — of course, what a question to ask of so experienced a gardener as you — you

remember the tubercles on the roots of the bean thro' which it enriches the soil with nitrogen from the air. Well, when that simple device was patented, Omnipotence must have regretted — if Omnipotence can regret anything except of course the creation of man — that there was no such attachment on every other plant. It is most ingenious, if true.

But what a sloppy day! Everything from my shoes to the potatoes dug yesterday is dripping with water. I begin to understand the discomforts of life in the trenches. Think for a moment how terrible that must have been, and years of it — no, don't think of it!

HANCOCK, N.H.
October 15, 1919

You can't expect much of a letter from me to-day when I am all in a twitter at the thought of going, a poor Hancock bumpkin, into the real world, to Dublin! To be sure, now that the place is deserted, the prospect is not so alarming as it would be if this were midsummer; but for one who has forgotten what little he may ever have known of the habits of good society, it is very depressing. I am sure to make some awful *gaffe*, to eat with the wrong fork, to forget where I am and reach across the table, horrors! You see I have been in no strange house since we dined at Mrs. W.'s last spring, and I think that was the only time I dined out last winter, once

at Rhodes's, to meet Beveridge, so irreverent are the young to the aged.

I have just been reading in 'Harper's' for August an article by Franck — the man who started off with 13 cents in his pocket and walked from Venezuela to Cape Horn, or went through Europe on $15.96, and wrote interesting books about his travels. I urged you to get his book on Spain. There is a lot of Spain he doesn't get into it, but he gets things there which are very well worth noting. He is an interesting fellow, sometimes dull as a long walk in a dull country of a hot day; but in these 'Harper' articles, from July on, he is most entertaining and quite unwontedly brisk. I have read August and October and I can't urge you too warmly to look them up. I am sure Mrs. M. will like them and you will yourself, so do get them. . . .

Eliot's demand for something new can't get away from my mind. It seems to me an astounding statement for a man in his position. I wonder if, when he goes to the shoemaker's for a new pair of shoes and the man asks, 'What size?' he says, 'No matter about the size, what I want is a pair of *new* shoes. They must be *new*.' (Like John Homans's story of Banks and the sugar-coated pill.) . . .

Now the doctors affirm that W. W. enjoys perfect health, was never better in his life. I wonder. Their asseverations do not at once convince me. This world is full of lies and liars. If he is so well, one would expect him to be able to do something;

if he is a seriously sick man, they might say so. They have the air of trying to make him ride two horses at once, and he is in no condition to do that. Meanwhile the Senators are showing how inaccurate he was in some of his speeches, inaccurate but running in his usual form. He does not love the truth and doesn't mind a lie.

I must say that, with as open a mind to a lie as any one need have, I can't understand how W. W. can have repeated his misstatement about Japan, when he knew and had acknowledged that he was wrong — unless his mind was affected. In either case he is in an unfortunate position. . . .

Those accursed cockerels have about 50 acres in which to roam and 13 buildings to visit, but they can find nothing better to do than to gather on my front steps, directly in front of the wire door, and there to spend the whole day. I wonder what inspires them. You who know the intricate workings of their minds, I pray you, tell me.

HANCOCK, N.H.
July 22, 1921

I saw in the paper the other day that henceforth the police were going to control mobs by the use of gas, lachrymatory gas. I think it would be much more amusing and quite as efficacious to use laughing-gas. Imagine a mob threatening fire and slaughter, waving knives and torches, and suddenly a thin vapor moves toward them and the

dark-browed leader breaks into a silly giggle, which in a moment spreads through the whole crowd. They are doubled in laughter while the police disarm and bind them. It would be most amusing on the stage. But then do they think that assassins are going to wait to be caught in this way? Is it their habit to leave all the appliances of civilization in the hands of the authorities? They put the last results of science into opening safes, they have discovered new possibilities in the automobile, and have applied the airplane to burglary most successfully, so that I can imagine the police being showered with laughing-gas themselves and advancing with roars of laughter. That would be more amusing than the other plan. Imagine a whole family sitting crying while masked (gas-masked) burglars were emptying their jewel and silver boxes. No, it is bad enough to have skunks about — I suppose, though, the little beasts might be an honest man's sole protection — without having to dread the fumes of these new gases. I ask you, Mr. M., what the world is coming to — I know very well where it is going. I used to think it would be blown to smithereens by some new explosive, but now I am sure somebody will open some vials and let out some awful stink that will kill every living thing, and maniacs in Mars will try to communicate with this dead planet in vain.

HANCOCK, N.H.
October 7, 1919

It has cleared and the trees are most gorgeous, all red and gold. Jerusalem the golden is a cob-webbed corner by the side of Hancock. The show is superb. Moreover, the beans are done. I finished my task at 4.30 yesterday. We weighed the total product and appraised it at something like $2.40 at present prices. When you consider that I have worked some 4 or 5 days to produce this meagre result, you will understand why farming does not pay, and why I am aware of some grave defect in the present social conditions and propose to study anarchy. . . . The only way to stop the impending ruin of the country is by a 'drive' for say 2 millions to be settled upon me. That is the new cure (and a good one) for discontent: but it is only a palliative. When all the Harvard professors have new furnished their houses and bo't new cars, they will find they need still more money to keep them up. The railmen (good word!) are never contented. But I promise to make 2 millions do and to complain no more. By the way, they don't seem to have got very far on their way to 15 millions for the College. It is a good deal of money to throw away, and I don't see where they are going to get it, unless they lean so long on Mr. Rockefeller's gate that he sends them what they lack, to get them away. Talking of riches — my favorite subject — I see in the paper that Mrs. —— has taken 4 saddle horses to

Hot Springs, not for their health, but to ride. Marriage is a lottery. I knew that lady when she was a stupid girl with what, before her husband became rich, every one called a squint. (Now we recall that Venus had a cast in her eye.) She was one of the dullest girls imaginable and when Midshipman —— proposed to her, because she was amiable to him and spoke to him when he was lonely and friendless at a ball, — and married her, every one wondered for a moment. Then suddenly he made a huge fortune, and there she is riding four horses at once, as they used to do at Franconi's hippodrome, which stood where the Fifth Avenue Hotel, now forgotten, used to stand. . . .

In order to repair my shattered fortunes, on hearing that new cider-apples have gone up 10 p.c. and are bought at $1.10 the cwt., I yesterday nearly broke my back wheeling the detested fruit from one end of the farm to the other. I had done the beans, as I told you, and it would have amused you to see me picking out the defective ones. At first when I began, it was clumsy work as if I were wearing boxing-gloves, but gradually I became more skillful and would pluck the offending object with an aim as sure as a hen's. Indeed I reminded myself of that useful bird. At first it was like beginning to use chopsticks, one can do nothing with them, but in time they grow to the hand and seem like daintier fingers. . . .

M. goes to town to-morrow and will take some

of my books, also beans and preserves. I am not a great eater of beans myself, and I fancy you never touch the national dish which is so closely allied with the detested pork; still it is well to have them in the house, and the black bean makes a most delicious soup.

I have but little else to say and I must drop my pen to go over critically a small lot of black beans, that they may be removed and not shock the Z.s. This is a distracted letter. The fact is my epistolary sands are running low and I am preparing to hibernate in your library chair, with the light behind me and my hand over my eyes. I can't tell you how refreshing I find that hour after a tiring day. One sits there, there is an unbroken stream of words to soothe one, the warmth of the fire is most pleasing, and I get up an hour later a new man, full of strength. Your talk does me a lot of good. I love to listen to you.

HANCOCK, N.H.
October 8, 1919

Yes, the autumn is here and when our waterpipes thaw, I shall know that the chill is abating. . . . Yesterday the Z.s came to lunch. . . . They have come East on a short leave. I had some talk with Z. about various things. . . . I spoke to him about what we have heard, that the American advance in the Argonne was held up by muddled communications, the American generals disdaining to take

advice from the long experienced French and English. He said it was perfectly true, and that the Canadians and Australians had done the same thing. The navy, he said, at once put itself under British command and so worked for six months, and then only did —— make some suggestions. Moreover, he told me Morgan and other prominent New York men insisted that —— be sent with his forces. He added that later, at about 11 P.M., it came out in friendly chats with English officers that the British had been rather in terror lest the navy (U.S.) should ask to run everything their own way and take hold of the question as if it were a new one. I said the English probably had *shown* none of this solicitude, and he agreed, adding, whoever thinks the English stupid only shows he doesn't know them; they don't wear their hearts on their sleeves, but they are a wonderful lot. He admires them greatly, having learned to know them. He shares my feeling about W. W. and *loathes* Daniels. Z. is a good fellow, you see, and, since he agrees with us, very wise. . . .

Dear me, what a dull letter I am writing and I can't think how to improve it. I have actually nothing to say. I must go forth soon and pick the chilly bean and see what tomatoes may be left worth picking; but that is not an inspiring subject, even to you with the soul of a tiller of the soil. If you were here I should ask you to go forth and expel from my demesne three heifers who have been

trespassing and eating of my herbage. They don't do much harm, I confess. We have telephoned to their owner to reclaim them. Rover saw some sheep the other day and ran for his life! They were new to him and might be tigers.

The life of Gompers will be interesting reading and it would be more interesting if all his correspondence could be included; — tho' perhaps he hasn't much put down in black and white. Of late he has not been maintaining the position he held a few months ago; but it must be hard to understand how many different strings have been pulling him.

HANCOCK, N.H.
October 9, 1919

Having just nearly broken my back picking frozen horticultural beans (I regret to say low bush) in sufficient abundance to feed starving Russia and Poland, I pause long enough to write you a line and to rest my poor old back before going forth to supply the needs of famished China. The fertility of the bean is, as you know, most amazing. I am sure that the moist beans I pick will never be any good, except perhaps in ice cream, but my lady is obdurate and thinks it a matter of solemn duty to pick every bean. Mr. Hoover ought to give her an order.

Yesterday was bitter chill, max. being 45°, and the evening was cool. Rover the much-beloved [family cat] didn't mind it, but went forth at 6,

refused to come in at 10 when I whistled for him with a sonority that filled my heart with pride, and only reappeared at breakfast this morning. He is punctual at meals. He must have had a cool night, for my thermometer fell to 32°. It's the funniest thing in the world to see him trying to entice the two surviving cockerels to play with him. You know poultry well enough, from your superficial studies of their intellect, to know that no fowl has a sense of humor, and that humor abounds in a cat. So Rover playfully runs at the birds, and then rolls over on his back to show he has no hostile intent; but they never take a joke, assume great airs of terror. He does this only when some one of us is looking on, that we may see that there is no malice in his treatment of them. Here is a true anecdote which you may consider. The other day he was sleeping in a north room and heard a motor climbing our hill; he jumped up, ran to a window in a south room, gazed out intently, and, seeing Margaret, ran down to the door to meet her. I know your stubborn, I might almost say Wilsonian, nature and not being already familiar with the nature of cats you will refuse to believe my interesting anecdote. Exactly so did T. R. deny any credence to many most instructive tales of animals. By the way, it seems to me that T. R. took the wrong side in denying protective coloring. The great fact seems to run through Nature from those insects that look like bits of twigs to higher

beings. Otherwise we must content ourselves with admiring a number of interesting coincidences. . . .

Having toiled again till — I knew it would happen, I felt them loosening — some vertebræ became detached and are now floating about my system. It is a mishap that especially befalls athletes. Scarcely a football player who has his biography recounted in the papers, that escapes this plague. He generally collects these spare vertebræ, I suppose, in his knee-pans. Now for a change I propose to paint Edith's storm door which was put on a few days ago and that has never seen the color of any paint. There is some enamel paint in her cellar which has no other use — some left over. I love painting of this delicate kind, not the miserable affectation of mixing colors on a canvas, but grand, broad expanses, as on a door. Thus you see that I am become one of the swiftly disappearing race of 'handy-men.' They once inhabited New England in great numbers, but now only a few survive. The growth of trade-unions, with their rigid specialization of various kinds of work, deprived the 'handy-man' of his opportunities. He couldn't turn a faucet without offending a plumber, or put up a stovepipe without arousing the hatred of the united order of stovemen, and as for painting a door — you can imagine the disturbance. What it will be when soviets rule, I don't know. Fortunately we are not so highly civilized here in Hancock as people are elsewhere, and most of us can do anything

(but *do* nothing, might be added by the censorious), and so after bending my back into the letter 'S' over beans, I straighten it while plying the paint-brush. I must at once to the congenial task. . . .

The foregoing lines about Rover tempt me irresistibly to thrust rudely into this Correspondence a brief paragraph. — Rover was the family cat, to whom Tom was devotedly — I had almost written sentimentally — attached. Yet perhaps not more so than to his successor, Scamperdown. In fact Tom loved all cats and in return all cats loved Tom. It was astonishing to see how those usually shy and distrustful creatures instinctively recognized in him a friend in whom they could repose entire confidence. They would come to him and nestle in his lap with perfect security and affection. In all his correspondence the reigning favorite with all his characteristics, habits and achievements, constantly played an important part. A few days ago his daughter called to my attention this paragraph, written by Robertson Nicoll in a paper in the volume called 'A Bookman's Letters.' 'He had none of the roughness of Dr. Johnson, but he had all his tenderness, and many of his tastes. In particular, like all good men, he had a devoted love of cats.' Mr. Nicoll, when he wrote these sentences, intended to apply them to Dr. Richard Garnett, but all Perry's friends know that in fact they were a description of Perry.

HANCOCK, N.H.
October 14, 1919

There is nothing to say. The process of setting things to rights goes on unendingly. I can't with any conscience praise the beauty of the day; not that it lacks charm, but because you know all about such things. The only news is that we all go tomorrow to Dublin to lunch at a Miss W.'s (of New York) at the invitation of Mrs. F. W., who is staying there and put Miss W. up to this wild social adventure. Mrs. F. W. is rather an adorer of L. and she can't conscientiously ask her over and leave me out. After lunch, if I am truly tactful, I must go outside and smoke with Mrs. W.'s chauffeur. This will be my only trip to Dublin this summer, just as I have been to Peterborough only once. The gaiety of Dublin must be extinct. Pumpelly has gone; almost every one is gone; but so much the better. There will be less occasion for wearing white kid gloves. With the jealousy that always exists in small villages when mention is made of a prosperous neighbor, I always accuse the people of Dublin of sleeping in white kid gloves, but really, in spite of the persistent effort to make it extravagant, there is gorgeousness only in comparison with the sordidness and squalor of Hancock. It's a really beautiful place and would be only much more charming if practically no one lived there. They are nice people, but it would be a nuisance to be within range, on the front line, and exposed to an attack at any time

and compelled to go over the top in counter-attack once in so often. Now we are in reserve, and at times the enemy penetrate so far as here in tanks — I mean cars — at any hour that suits the chauffeur; — but we are really out of danger.

If you will reserve a column of the social news department of the 'Sunday Herald,' I will give you the first right of a complete report of the interesting event. It should have some such heading as 'The Last Glories of the Expiring Season,' or 'Dublin Doings,' but you will see to that without my needing to make any hints.

CHAPTER IX

POLITICS

PERRY was no politician. The game of politics he never learned to play; nor did his personal intervention therein carry him farther than to the ballot-box. Yet while others played he watched with a very critical eye. He read more newspapers than any other man I ever knew or heard of; his marvellous, inexplicable, incredible capacity for reading a sheet at a glance rendered this possible for him. In consequence, in all the tirades of our Congressional orators he was well posted, and when he began to discuss them it was a joy to listen to his trenchant sarcasm and ridicule. In a letter to me he once suggested the 'Question for a debating society: "Which is the greater, the people's contempt for politicians, or that of the politicians for the people?"' Of course he was an idealist, and an idealist fares ill under a system which makes 'trading' inevitable. For 'trading' can, of course, be carried on only between right and wrong, and Perry was absolutely intolerant of wrong. He stood always stubbornly for righteousness — as he saw it. It was a highly honorable attribute, but of course led to his being constantly a dissatisfied critic, alike of men and of measures. Accordingly in all his comments there is never a glint of hero worship or what is called

loyalty; he never meekly followed a leader; nor ever swallowed any party policy whole. In the matter of judging concerning measures and policies, he was intelligent and always intended to be judicial. But he was a man of very deep feeling and very strong convictions, and it must be admitted that in some cases his condemnation passed into that stage in which it is more correctly described as an antipathy; — that is to say, he was very human.

To come down to the definite question of his political allegiance: though he called himself a Democrat, I think that he generally, but not quite all the time, voted the Republican ticket.

It was matter of infinite entertainment to listen to his diatribes. His satire was so keenly sarcastic, his condemnation so eloquent, that he held his company quite enchained, equally whether they were in accord with what he was so forcefully saying or not. Of course he found ideal victims among what we call 'public' men, and in good truth he took no little pleasure in the opportunities which he so well improved. This uncompromising temper, this demand for perfection, natural enough to a young enthusiast, remained with Perry all his life. The indifference which is born of cynicism never developed in his character. While admitting that in all human probability statecraft often could not be prevented from going wrong, sometimes from debasing itself, yet he never could bring him-

self to shrug his shoulders and to say with the cynic, '*N'importe!* Let them go on.' On the contrary, so long as he lived, he was always angered by the spectacle and he would cry aloud and incessantly against it. The fact commands praise, though he may have accomplished no great practical results. Further it is to his credit that, keen as was his interest in political matters, yet he never allowed it to carry him to the point of a personal quarrel. Reasonable and peaceable discussion was always possible with him, equally whether the topic was a measure or a person.

The first expression which we have of his interest in these directions occurred soon after his graduation, when he was studying in Europe. Though young, and surrounded by so many foreign distractions, he still always had his eye on affairs in his own land. He was studying in Paris at the time of the impeachment of President Johnson, and already his interest and his pessimistic tendency began to appear. He writes (February, 1868): 'We get here [Germany] the news that Johnson is to be impeached. . . . Looking from here it does seem as if our great and glorious country was going to part, and as if the House of Representatives was lashing and spurring it toward that fate, with its Supreme Court bill and Reconstruction Act Number Four. But I will not enrage you. If there should ever appear in any of the papers a good logical and unpartisan defence of the Republican party, please

send it to me.' In March following he wrote to his friend, Moorfield Storey: 'The blackest thing at home is the proposing to pay our debt in greenbacks. If repudiation is accomplished I think I shall sell out at home and return to this Continent and pass the rest of my life in trying to forget that I ever was an American citizen, and trying to live down the scorn in which I shall be held by the cheated Germans. . . . If satire and honest, unprejudiced ridicule could take the place of education the influence of the paper [the New York 'Nation'] would be very considerable. . . . There is no help for us save education. Every one who refines and corrects our Western sensitive conceit does the country good. A belief in the efficiency of good manners, etc., is no pandering to aristocratic whims, but a step upward to the ground where all people meet in common. After all, this is but a slight matter compared with the many advantages we have and which one sees by comparing our last winter with that in France. For example, good manners there have not prevented pieces of brutality of which I cannot think without anger and which, thank God, have no equal by us.' The influence of the afore-mentioned newspaper, upon Perry's way of thinking, is noteworthy. The acidulous and undeniably brilliant assaults by Mr. Godkin for a long while fascinated him, and very probably in the plastic period of his youth gave a permanent bent to his line of thought.

Perhaps the best plan in treating of his political views will be, not to attempt to set them forth, but rather so far as possible to let him speak for himself in his own letters. Pursuing this course, let us begin with the earliest which I have found.

March 10, 1896: 'If I didn't say any more in my letter about the folly of American politics, it was only to spare you more chatter about that unsavory subject. Heaven knows it has worried and distressed me enough! To see a nation going mad is a very lamentable thing! . . . Your friend, H. Crispi Lodge, has a good deal of responsibility on his shoulders; and almost as bad are the stalwart Cleveland men. It is better to form one's opinions of men from their actions than of their actions from the men.'

But it is fair to add to these words of depression a line from a letter written a few days later:

April 25, 1896: Referring to the foregoing he said: 'It was a dull letter and when you are called upon by an eager public to edit the Life and Letters of Thomas Sergeant Perry, it *must* be omitted.'

Ought I to have omitted it? If so, then by the same order all that makes this volume entertaining would likewise have to be cast out.

In June, 1896, there came to me a letter which opened with much cheerful chat about a bicycle tour in Italy. This introductory paragraph, being interpolated, may make a bright spot in this serious chapter. 'Our main joy has been learning how to

travel in Italy. Every time we come here we make a reduction of about 20–25 per cent, and I calculate that, the next time but one, I shall receive a salary for visiting the country. . . . I don't wonder that the French like their own cookery. We have had some mighty mean picking, . . . But this is a civilized place and the hand of man has not wholly abused the gifts of the Creator. An excellent lady, who has thrown in her lot with mine, sometimes sighs for rice boiled 22 minutes, but on the whole she prospers in spite of loathsome veal. I shall have a lot of stories to tell you; indeed you will regret that Columbus ever discovered Italy.' But the atmosphere changes and becomes murky with the ominous words: 'As to politics, I don't think the condition was ever worse, because never have we so readily left matters in the hands of politicians. The only cure lies in our own personal effort, and that we don't make because we have become accustomed to having things looked after by others, and they naturally abuse their chance. They are a lot as pernicious as the priests of the Middle Ages and will require as drastic a treatment. Our weakness is their opportunity, and they are ruining us. . . . It is a great mistake and a costly one. I think things have got to be worse before they are better. Our last delusion is that affairs right themselves; they don't, we have to right them.'

July 6, 1896: A black day for Perry, as this paragraph will show: 'Let us exchange groans over

our unhappy country and solace ourselves with the thought, that it will have the task of getting out of the slough, into which it is advancing, long after we are resolved into elemental dust. But why should we complain? Our God is a just God, and He gives us exactly the rulers we want and deserve. We find it amusing to send a pack of knaves and fools to govern us, and — there they are! etc., etc.' And later in the same: 'After all, we have in McKinley a man who admirably represents the American people, a Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, who dares to say that cowardly silence is the highest wisdom, that straddling is climbing, that transparent craft is statesmanship.' The next day he continued in somewhat less acrid strain. Referring to a letter of mine, he said: 'You ask me if the Creator feels altogether contented and cheerful under his responsibility. I am able to assure you that He does not. He deeply regrets that He accepted the Devil's bet that he could not make a world inside of a week; for, being omniscient, He perceives that was altogether too short a time, and He especially laments that his New-England conscience caused him to stop for the Sabbath when He might have put in some much-needed finishing touches. But we mustn't put too much blame on the Creator. I know it's as fashionable as appendicitis; but we must first do everything that is in our power; and we might begin by learning that good government won't go on by itself. It is the product of unceasing

toil. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, etc., etc.'

A priori one would expect that the tariff would be a topic which would stand very nearly at the end of the list of things interesting to a man of Perry's tastes. On the contrary, he took a constant and profound interest in it. He was no advocate of high protection. He was 'amused' to find almost every one ignorant of the 'robberies' committed by the tariff; and he predicted: 'Some day that will be understood, and then it will go.' References to it were frequent and he was not always in so amiable a frame of mind as to be 'amused.' On one occasion it was Mr. Roosevelt's attitude concerning the tariff which induced a criticism from Perry. Roosevelt had been a pupil under Perry at Harvard in the old days and had been a not infrequent visitor at Perry's house. Their relations were therefore entirely friendly, yet it must be admitted that it was not always perfectly easy to reconcile personal good will with some measure of political disapproval. This condition was natural enough and could be accepted with liberality by both.

Of course it was largely his own interest in Europe which inspired the following outburst in 1896: 'Then, too, who has pandered to the notion that we have nothing to do with "Abroad"? Cabot Lodge has preached from that text morning, noon, and night; so has his *famulus*, Teddy Roosevelt. 'Harper's Weekly' and 'Monthly' have kept up the cry.

They ought all to rejoice that Bryan has so well learned a lesson they have so carefully taught him. They are all trying to make a China out of America. On the whole I dread McKinley almost as much as Bryan. . . . What such times need is a MAN. We have a rubber toy who only seems to exist when Hanna blows into him; then he squeaks — and collapses into something like a rag. . . . We have seen nations vanquished, nations dying by dry rot; it is interesting to see one committing suicide.'

May 7, 1906: 'Yes, I saw Theodore Roosevelt's objection to using a muck-rake. The question is not to be settled as a general principle, i.e., it is {right / wrong} to use a muck-rake; but: Are the things to be raked up true or not? If true, what are you going to do about them? To call criticism of the government "muck-raking," and so to be despised, would be foolish. What, too, is foolish is the hysterical way in which our people take up everything for a time with unreasoning fervor, and then drop everything. . . . As for Theodore Roosevelt, it is a pity that when they enlarged the White House they forgot to build a room where the President might do his thinking.'

June 29, 1919, found Perry in a more tolerant frame of mind. 'I am not besottedly set against Theodore Roosevelt. There have been moments when I have been disposed to look upon him favorably, and I have felt his charm. But there have

been things I couldn't forgive, fatal faults, weaknesses that do not suit the character he gave himself.'

Mr. Roosevelt's once somewhat famous but now forgotten trifling with the sanctity of the spelling-book naturally aroused the ire of a conservative literary gentleman, and Perry wrote: 'If Theodore Roosevelt can be turned off as a spelling-reformer, the whole world will be the better. He has an endless occupation before him and he will find converts as rare as does the missionary, so that he will never be able to break away into more dangerous forms of anarchy. He could be pleasantly occupied in writing his memories of the Spanish War in reformed English. . . . I am glad to see that the sheep-like public at last refuse to follow all his theories, and the discovery that his orders are illegal much amuses me. If a man wants to spell, in his letters, in a manner different from his neighbors, why — let him. . . . I suppose that some crank like Brander Matthews dined with him and talked spelling for two hours, and that Theodore Roosevelt said: "There is nothing simpler," sat down, wrote his letter, received congratulations on being a man who does things, and went to bed to dream of Napoleon at Moscow arranging the Théâtre Français. The man has many wheels, but not a balance wheel.'

Perry, however, did not believe in the transmission of sin. He had the liberality to write as follows:

June 6, 1919: 'Did you see the letter of Theo-

dore Roosevelt II in a recent 'Herald'? It was written in answer to an epistle of that pestiferous Jew, F——; — I don't wonder pogroms are fashionable in Poland — and was a crusher. His father could not have written it, for it seemed to be inspired by principle, to be perfectly sincere, and to be without excitement, gnashing of teeth, etc. How that young man can expect to prosper with such opinions about our old friend Demos, I can't see. The only hope for civilization seems to me to be the impossibility of navigating a revolution. It starts with a lot of passengers on board for some port in Utopia, but gets dreadfully tossed about, lost in the fog, caught on shoals, battered on the rocks. The passengers get killed and the boilers blow up, slaughtering nearly everyone in the neighbourhood. Then a few survivors appear, haul the wreck off the reef, repair the hull and put the old ship to some good use. The future of the world depends on the miscarriage of the revolution.'

The outbreak of the World War, of course, found Perry a most decided anti-German, and his feelings grew in ardor as the war advanced. He rejoiced when our laggard President at last was fairly driven to assent to our entrance into it. Mr. Wilson had already become, indeed, his pet aversion, and his eloquent invectives will rejoice the souls of those who are of his way of thinking — a host which just at present at least seems to be rapidly growing in numbers. Extracts from some of his letters will

be found entertaining, at least by these sympathetic readers. He writes, November 20, 1918: 'I see that Woodrow Wilson is going abroad. He will butt into everything. I do not congratulate his fellow-workers, who will have to endure his prosy speeches. I have been looking at some of them. His frequent use of the word "frank" is enough to arouse suspicion. No one ever says he is going to be frank unless he is about to tell a lie. It's like the person who wants to speak to you "as man to man."'

June 12, 1919: 'I think this row in the Senate one of the prettiest I have ever known. Our friend, Woodrow Wilson, by his desire to play a lone hand, appears to have ruined the whole game.'

June 13, 1919 (Hancock, N.H.): 'I remember when William James and I were abroad together, and the impeachment of Johnson was going on, that he lamented the way all our political questions resolved themselves into haggling over legal points with no reference to higher principles. At last Congress has a question to discuss which has something outside of legal definitions to be settled. What is really questioned is Woodrow Wilson's conduct. If this had been ordinarily discreet, the League would stand much better chance of being approved; but Woodrow Wilson *can't* be civil, and now he sees the consequences; but he will learn nothing. He has had many chances of learning the folly of too much talk, but what does he care? He doesn't have to listen to what he says. He is an autocrat, or he

would at times relax and send a flower to his enemies. With tact much can be done at a very slight expense; but no!

The whole outlook seems to me very bad. I think Europe is in for a lot of dark days, and the Germans will be just smart enough and docile enough to stop first — and go to work, thus establishing themselves firmly in the future. We shall see, or perhaps we shan't see. But why do I write these things and prophesy? It's very foolish.' In view of all that has been going on up to this time, there seem interesting seeds of wisdom in this forecast. Has not this been precisely the rôle played by Germany?

June 22, 1919 (Hancock, N.H.): 'Did you see Hugh Cabot in last evening's "Transcript"? It is mighty good reading, and reminds me of some of the detective stories that used to come out in "Household Words." The administration will not enjoy it. Those days of strict neutrality, which the "Sun" keeps fresh in our memories, can't be recalled with pleasure by Woodrow Wilson. I think Harvey and the "Sun" criminally wrong in trying to make us distrust and hate England. It is merely, in my opinion, the rankest demagogism, on a par with the Irish politics — those in this country, I mean. To say that the League puts us under England's power is manifestly absurd; they might as well say that since this plan was devised by Smuts, we become slaves of South Africa. It is well enough

to attack Woodrow Wilson and to condemn his management of the League question, but to condemn a league and alliance, or at least friendliness with England, is to play Germany's game. It's a serious responsibility a paper has, and the "Sun" runs away from its duty. But it is amusing.'

July 11, 1919 (Hancock, N.H.): 'Woodrow Wilson's remarks about the "great moral force that flung itself into the struggle" and "the great ideals of a free people" that were inconquerable, shows what an unsatisfactory creature he is. It must have been pleasant for Clemenceau and Balfour to have that sort of talk poured into their ears, as if before Woodrow Wilson at last was forced to find out something about the war and driven into it against his will, it had been a disgraceful quarrel. There are certain sounds in the human voice; a whimpering whine is one, which I cannot endure. When I affect it, as I sometimes do in fun, it drives my family wild. There is a certain way of talking, such as abounds in Sunday schools, a false piety, accompanied with upward rolling of the eyes — well, it's awful! Woodrow Wilson is a master. What he says about the superiority of our reason for entering the war, besides its smug, psalm-singing brag, seems to me most offensive and insolent. But he can't help it. I am glad, however, that he is back. I think the Republicans have got into rather a hole. The condition of the whole world is more important than the welfare of that party, and unless one wants

to aid Germany, it is necessary to combine to keep her down for a time, as we had to combine to thrash her. To back out from that is to play Germany's game. I think they will find a way out; but before it is found out Woodrow Wilson will, I think, have a chance to hear some unpleasant truths. Harvey and some of the Senators have disgraced humanity by some of the things they have said, really worse than Wilson, in my opinion.'

July 16, 1919: 'As Mr. Dooley says: If a prophet wants to be heard, he has to prophesy trouble. . . . I am a good deal of a prophet myself, because I am such an enthusiastic pessimist. I even shudder at Wilson's ghastly talk about the ideal, the light he sees, etc., etc. . . . Did you notice the other day in accepting some one's resignation he spoke of his "genuine regret." He can't get over the wish to seem genuine, and he thinks that is the way of doing it, as if boasting would make a coward brave.'

September 10, 1919: 'As for Woodrow Wilson: my eye caught the last words of his speech at Omaha about the "*heart of America beating on the great prairies.*" Really a man who can write such stuff deserves impeachment!' That it was tawdry oratory, certainly, to come from one who passed as a scholar may be admitted. But he was not addressing it to such critics as Perry.

September 23, 1919. P.S. (Hancock, N.H.): 'Poor Woodrow Wilson is hard pressed for arguments when he quotes Theodore Roosevelt in his

support. Indeed, in his speeches I have seen no arguments, only statements of his opinion. If modest reservations are made, and the treaty ratified, there need be no undue delay; but such is Woodrow Wilson's detestable temper that he will do all he can to upset any attempt at compromise. He would rather see the treaty torn to pieces than modified in any way. He is not a sweet character.'

All the while that Perry was so strenuously assaulting Wilson, there was no man in the country who desired more earnestly a league of peace than Perry did. He would take a league which was open to criticism rather than no league at all. His bitterest hostility toward Mr. Wilson was based on his conviction that it was the egotistical greediness for fame on the part of that official which made him obstinately refuse to accept any amendments of his document. He wrote:

October 6, 1921: 'I think the persistence of America in declining to have anything to do with the League of Nations has gone on long enough. It has at any rate succeeded in making the country universally hated, and has established its reputation for obstinate sulkiness. The fear of entangling alliances is of course absurd. We are in this world and cannot be wholly independent of our neighbors. The League tries to accomplish what its foes once insisted should be done. Outsiders unanimously urge that we join. All the boards of Chambers of Commerce urge this. But it is op-

posed by whom? By a pack of politicians, who fear to lose place if they should change again. You know what politicians are, how readily they would ruin everything to save themselves. And here what has been the real root of their action but hatred of Wilson? What a way that is to rule the nation is painfully clear. I know you wholly disagree with me, but I am not afraid of entangling alliances; they are not so dangerous as everybody's hatred. So much for our distracted country!'

October 28, 1921: 'You must have noticed the dark hue of my opinions of the world; you have doubtless mourned in secret, and there seemed to be no break in the black cloud. A cold and cheerless pessimism was all you saw; but now there is a ray of what is perhaps misplaced confidence, for I must say it does seem to me that the people in America are beginning to get hold of a few economic facts. I say the people, not the hide-bound senators who not only can't, but won't, learn. The newspapers at times make remarks that show this change, and of course they make public opinion. As to the Senate I wonder if anywhere there are gathered into so small a space so many men with the intellect of scarecrows and the malevolence of yellow-jackets.'

When the volumes of Lane and of Page were published, Perry's exultation knew no bounds, more especially concerning the latter. For a long while every letter from him brought ardent expressions of his gratification. He seemed to see in these books

all his own views, set completely beyond all possibility of question and he exultantly sounded his delight.

June 22, 1922: 'The letters will make you detest Woodrow Wilson more than ever. . . . I acknowledge that I am violently prejudiced, but I must say that I cannot read Woodrow Wilson's long, crawling, sanctimonious sentences without loathing. I seem to see his eyes rolling heavenward, as his sentiments grow more and more exalted. He was to me a regular Stiggins; he reeks with hypocrisy — you see I *am* violent! But, do you read Page's letters.'

On the question concerning the foreign indebtedness to this country, growing out of the war, Perry's feelings were very strong. He strenuously insisted that we, rolling in wealth, and having filled our pockets from the needs of the Allies before we could muster up courage to join them, ought now to give them a receipt in full. That would in his opinion be only high-minded generosity, which we could well afford. 'I hope,' he said, 'some mercy will be shown. It will have to be shown. Even Congressional resolutions can't wring money from an empty purse, and experience has proved that the making of enemies, though undoubtedly agreeable, is not a useful employment.'

October 2, 1925: 'I see that this country by this time is once more endearing itself to Europe. If Congress gets hold of the money we shall be taught

what a great thing it is to spend it grandly, without lowering the taxes. . . . Hatred such as we are inspiring is a bad investment. No one knows when we shall regret it. Remember how our vindictive hatred of the English has injured friendly relations and marred free intercourse with a more civilized community and has encouraged a growth of barbarism.'

For a long while Senator Lodge held hardly a higher place in Perry's estimation than did the Senator's friend Roosevelt. For Perry would have it that Lodge sinned against light. It was his view that Lodge belonged in a higher stratum than that of most politicians. Was he not a gentleman, born to good traditions, with the best education to be had in the country? Perry conceived that, thus equipped, Lodge ought to conduct himself in politics as a sort of *preux chevalier*, regardless of the fact that in the United States a *preux chevalier* will be thrown overboard as soon as his distinguished but distasteful character is discovered. Further Perry expected him to be 'independent,' as though real independence were a possibility in a democracy. Independence there is a privilege of private life. But it so happened that the Senator was a cousin of Mrs. Perry, also a cousin and near friend of mine. This embarrassing conjunction Perry lamented, but it scantly enabled him to modify his honest hostility. In good time, however, at the close of the war I fancied that the situation held seeds for

hope and I ventured to invite both Lodge and Perry to dinner. The perilous experiment worked out well; they talked together all the evening, with civility at first and ultimately apparently with good understanding and even with amity. In point of fact quite a *rapprochement* was effected. Later it tottered a little on one or two occasions, but was never entirely overset. Perry became much more kindly disposed toward the cousin of his wife and the friend of his friend. An important element of union also was the bitter hostility which each of the two felt toward Mr. Wilson; a common enmity contributed to bring them into an alliance.

Even amid the temporary estrangements they managed occasionally to exchange letters in an amicable tone. There is even a story that at one time, when there was a matter in dispute between France and the United States, and the disputants were badly at odds, Perry wrote to Lodge a letter holding a suggestion which so pleased the Senator that he put it *en route* to Clemenceau, and it solved the perplexity. This story I have been unable to get in definite shape, because Perry's letters cannot be found. But Lodge's letters, and those of Salomon Reinach, who became engaged in the correspondence, plainly indicate that the core of truth in the matter is as above indicated. It may be added, as between the two men, that while Perry was indifferent as to what might be Lodge's feeling toward him, Lodge on the other hand felt very dif-

ferently. He had a personal liking for Perry and would fain have been on a friendly footing with him. Also he had respect for Perry's intellectual ability and gravely regretted the situation when he incurred Perry's censure. That is to say that he respected an idealist, but felt that to inject much idealism into practical affairs was impossible.

CHAPTER X

THE CLOSE

The years glided by and Perry found himself not immune from the common lot. Like all the rest of us who neglect to take the precautionary measure of dying young, he began to grow old. He had the familiar symptoms. The most grievous of these was the usual one: he began to become hard of hearing, a complaint which it is very difficult to take philosophically. But to his credit it should be said that, while he admitted it, he never grumbled, never complained, never lost his temper — in all these respects differing much from many of his fellowmen. The difficulty was hardly less lamented also by his friends, because talking with him had always been so delightful a way of passing an hour, and talking with a deaf man is never delightful at all. But worse still, it was that they began to lose the pleasure of hearing him talk. For even at his beloved Dinner Club he began to show an inclination to sit by in silence — he who had borne at least his full share so merrily in the good days passed! He wrote to me on November 5, 1922, from Hancock, New Hampshire: 'I had a letter from Moore written just before the dinner. I wish I had been there, were it only to taste partridge once more. I fear I couldn't have heard a word

that was said. I mean to rig up a wire station on the top of my head, which shall telegraph into my ears. If it is successful, I shall be able to draw profit from the wit and wisdom of my playmates.' Unfortunately the ingenious mechanism was never perfected.

One other disability came to add to his discomforts. Rheumatism assailed him, not with sharp and twisting pains, but with slow disability in one way and another. He began to find difficulty in walking, and this slowly increased, so that at last he was for a year or two annoyingly crippled. He managed always to get about, it is true, but during the last part of his life, it was slowly and with difficulty. The trouble also assailed his hands so as to make it difficult for him to hold a book of any considerable size or weight. For him this was a grave matter, and many ingenious devices did he resort to. They helped him more or less, but not sufficiently, and he had no resource except that highly moral, philosophical and admirable one of patience — an unalluring virtue!

On Perry's eightieth birthday his classmate and lifelong intimate friend, Charles E. Stratton, invited him and Moorfield Storey for a little social dinner at his apartment on Commonwealth Avenue. It might have been called, by the popular phrase, a 're-union' save for the prefix *re*; for it had taken place regularly during three quarters

of a century, without interruption save when Perry was abroad. Naturally it was a very pleasant evening, but Perry, who was at the time staying at my house, came back early because he was feeling ill and in much pain. The doctor was summoned and thereafter kept him in bed for many weeks. It was a heart attack, and at first appeared sufficiently serious; but it was subdued and he recovered almost his usual health, only subject to the very common but also very vexatious order to 'be prudent.' Very soon, however, he was leading substantially his old life, only obliged to respect in a very moderate way the teasing 'prudence.' It must be admitted that though he tried to be 'good,' the injunction did not much interfere with his daily occupations, social and at the Public Library. Perhaps there was, or perhaps anxious friends only fancied that there was, a slow decline in physical vigor. So it went on until the summer of 1927, when there began to be noticeable a manifest decrease in strength. He lived very quietly at 'Flagstones,' but was becoming evidently weaker, as the months passed. In the autumn the family came back to their home on Marlborough Street in Boston, and the lack of energy grew steadily more pronounced. His mind remained perfectly clear, it was only physically that he was changing. Finally, on the fifth day of May the end quietly came.

In September, 1904, Perry wrote to me: 'I meant to express to you my accord with you in the matter of funerals. I go to as few as possible, though in spite of all my efforts I have been roped into a good many. I detest what we may call volunteer funerals, where the officiating clergyman has to depend on a happy inspiration for his eloquence and, when he gets going, is sure to give his Creator a lot of advice. No, I think there should be a formal service, not too long. The only thing I object to in the Church of England service, and the razeed Unitarian of King's Chapel, is the long quotation from Saint Paul, which we have all heard so often. I can make nothing of it, and I don't believe the eminent saint himself knew very well what he wanted to say. I think there is too much gloom about funerals. When you consider what a common thing death is and, when it comes, how perfectly natural, I lament the effort to make it simply horrible. The Church loudly proclaims immortality, and generally promises, like a novel, that they all live happily hereafter; and yet it represents the act of leaving this notoriously evil world and entering another and better one as an unmixed evil. In many cases death is a long-desired relief; why pretend that it isn't? We always act as if our departed were going straight to — well, to eternal punishment. That is not tactful. The occasion is at times very sad; but why accumulate artificial gloom? It is the conventional

trappings, as if the worst of all possible things had happened, that I hate.'

His own funeral took place at his house on Marlborough Street, and its conduct would surely have entirely accorded with his own views as above expressed. It was conducted by Bishop Slattery, and was beautiful and touching as a funeral service can be. I am sure that no one who was present can ever forget it, or fail to feel its influence.

His ashes rest in the little graveyard at Hancock, under the shelter of pine-trees, looking out upon Norway Pond.

THE END

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